

# A Centaur's Life

11



story & art

**KEI MURAYAMA**

# A Centaur's Life

# 11



PRESENTED BY

**KEI  
MURAYAMA**

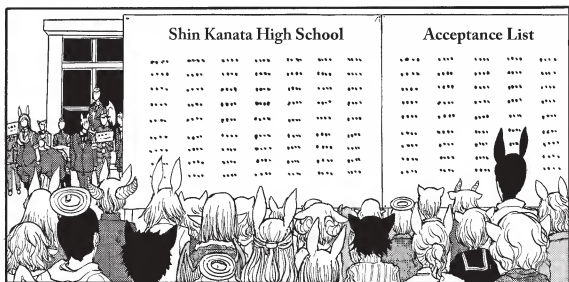
Teikoku Bunrin

Mathematics

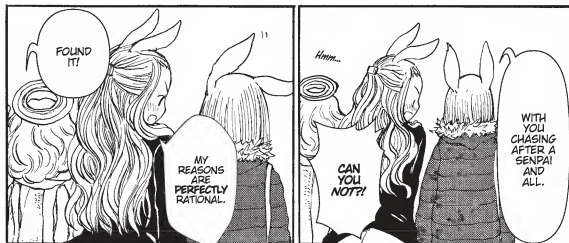
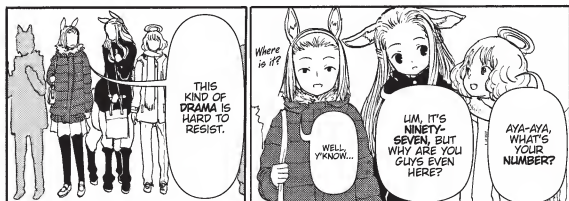


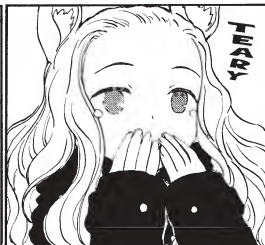
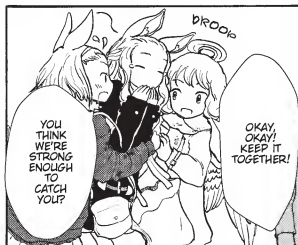
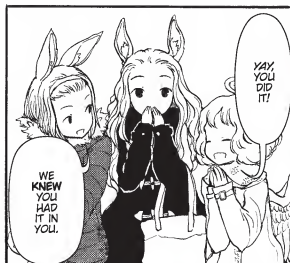


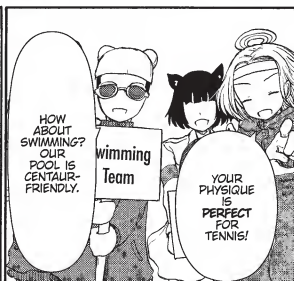
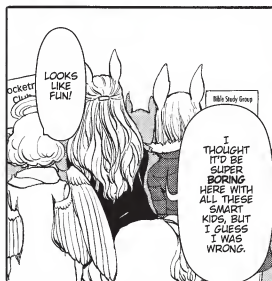
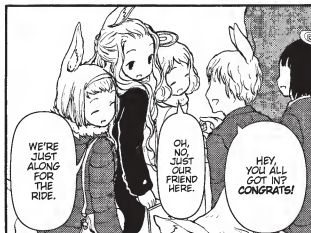
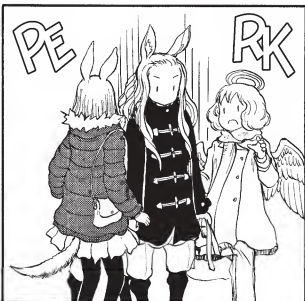
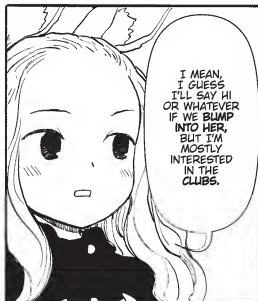


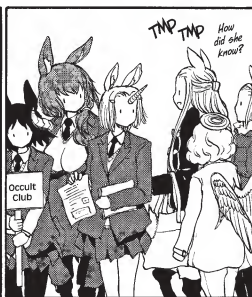
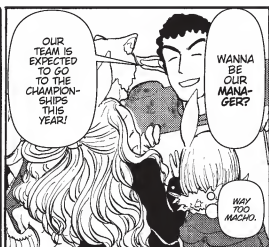


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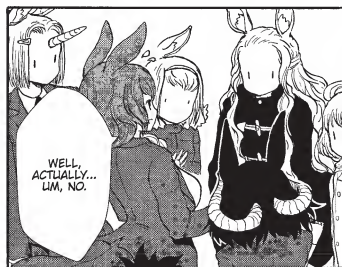
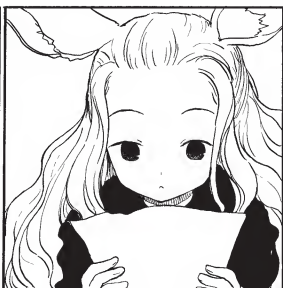
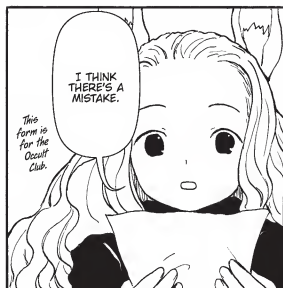


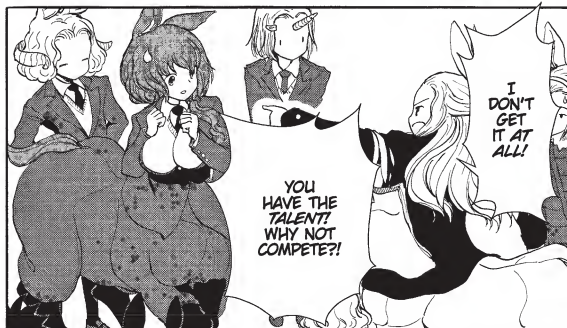
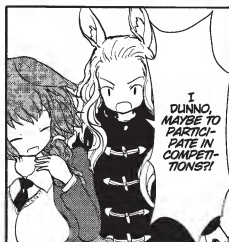


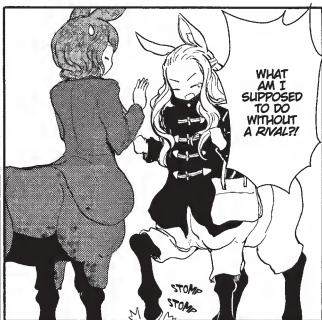


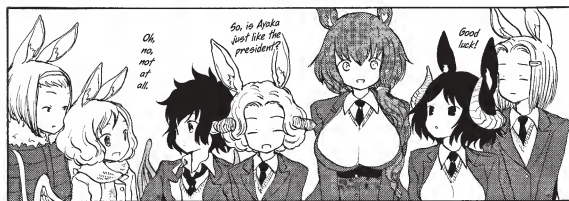
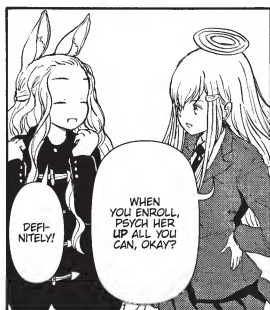
\*A senpai's junior.



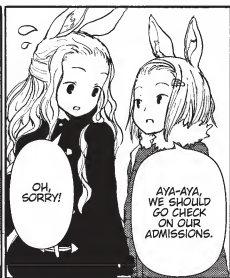
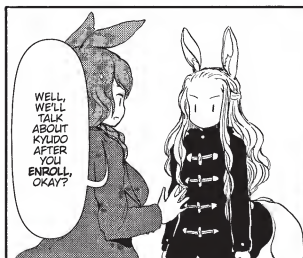


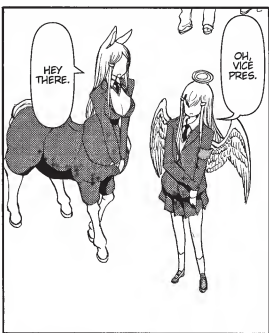














BUT  
I WAS  
NERVOUS  
ABOUT  
THE NEW  
SCHOOL.

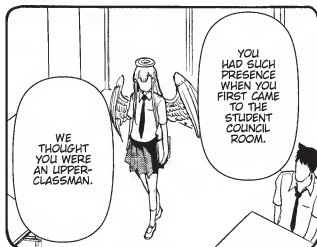


IT WAS  
SUCH A  
RELIEF TO  
GET IN.

PHEW.

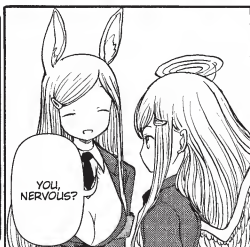
BUT IT  
DOES  
BRING  
BACK  
MEMORIES.

Did you  
see that,  
Kyoko?!

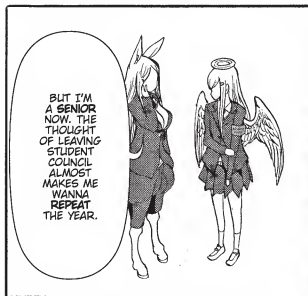


WE  
THOUGHT  
YOU WERE  
AN UPPER-  
CLASSMAN.

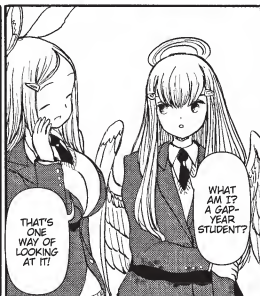
YOU  
HAD SUCH  
PRESENCE  
WHEN YOU  
FIRST CAME  
TO THE  
STUDENT  
COUNCIL  
ROOM.



YOU,  
NERVOUS?

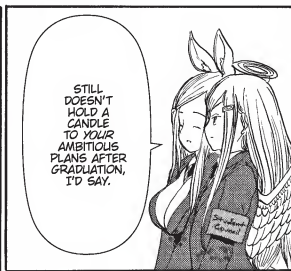
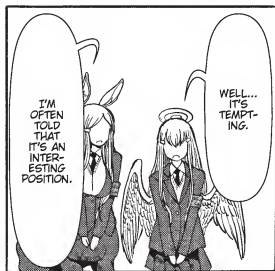
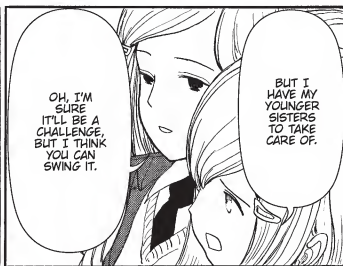


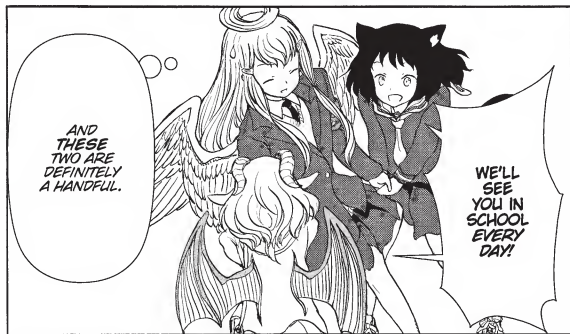
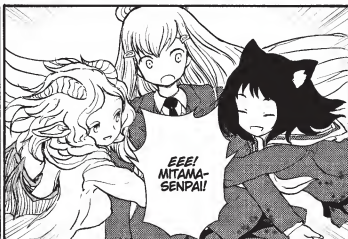
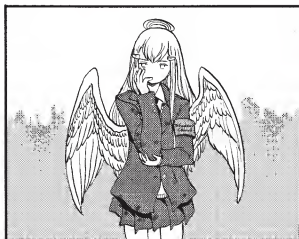
BUT I'M  
A SENIOR  
NOW. THE  
THOUGHT  
OF LEAVING  
STUDENT  
COUNCIL  
ALMOST  
MAKES ME  
WANNA  
REPEAT  
THE YEAR.



THAT'S  
ONE  
WAY OF  
LOOKING  
AT IT!

WHAT  
AM I?  
A GAP-  
YEAR  
STUDENT?







**A CentaUr's Life**

## UNDERSTANDING ANTARCTICANS: PART 1

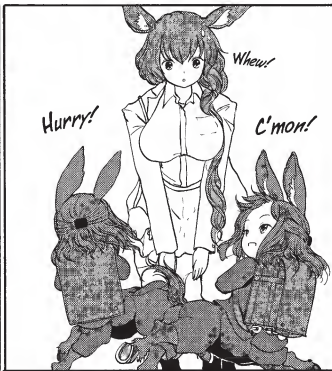
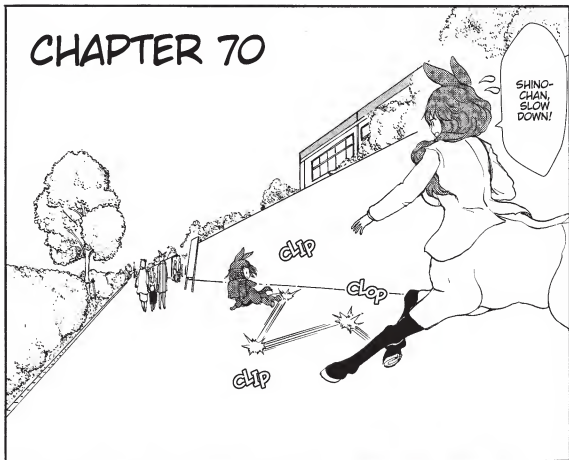
ANTARCTICANS ARE A NON-MAMMAL RACE THAT SOME BELIEVE FIRST MADE CONTACT WITH MODERN HUMAN CIVILIZATION IN THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY, BUT THIS PERSPECTIVE IS CLEARLY BIASED TOWARD THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE. IN FACT, ANTARCTICANS HAVE INTERACTED WITH PEOPLES IN LATIN AMERICA SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, BUT THE CORRELATION THOSE PEOPLE SAW BETWEEN ANTARCTICANS AND THEIR SERPENT DEITY QUETZALCOATL MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE THE TIMING OF FIRST CONTACT BETWEEN THE RACES. ALTHOUGH MUCH IS UNKNOWN ABOUT THEIR RACE, WE CAN DETERMINE THAT THEIR CIVILIZATION WAS SUFFICIENTLY ADVANCED AT THAT TIME THAT THOSE ANCIENT HUMANS CONSIDERED THEM TO BE DIVINE. THEY ARE SAID TO HAVE AIDED THE AZTEC AND INCA EMPIRES (ALSO KNOWN AS TAWANTINSUYU) IN REPELLING THE ATTEMPTED INVASION BY THE SPANISH CONQUISTADORS, BUT DUE TO THEIR SECRECY, WE ARE UNABLE TO CORROBORATE THIS CLAIM.

DESPITE THEIR LONG RELATIONSHIP, THE PEOPLE OF THE AZTEC AND INCA EMPIRES KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT THE ANTARCTICANS, WHO HAVE ALSO REFUSED TO ALLOW ANY MAMMALIAN HUMANS TO ENTER THEIR COUNTRY. THE ONLY INFORMATION WE HAVE ABOUT THIS ENIGMATIC CIVILIZATION COMES FROM THE TESTIMONY OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD CHANCE ENCOUNTERS WITH THEM, AND SOME ANECDOTES OFFERED BY ANTARCTICANS THEMSELVES. AS WE CONTINUE TO PIECE TOGETHER INFORMATION, WE HOPE TO PRESENT MORE KNOWLEDGE IN THE FUTURE. FOR NOW, THIS IS THE MOST CURRENT REPORT WE CAN OFFER.

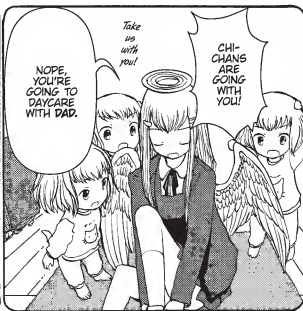
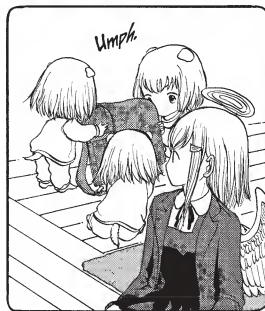
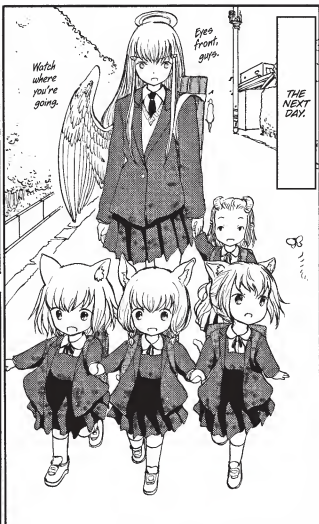


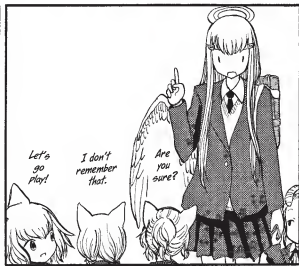
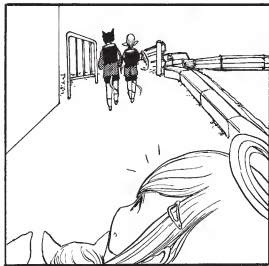
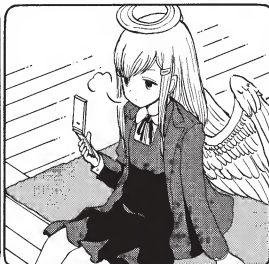
*Note: To our knowledge, all members of both the Warrior and Intellectual subspecies of Antarcticans are female.*

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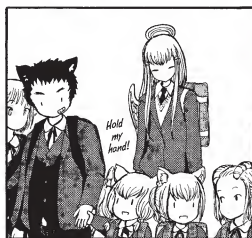


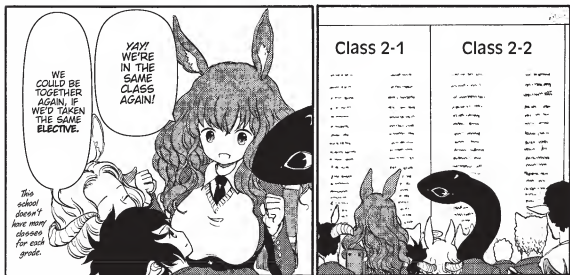
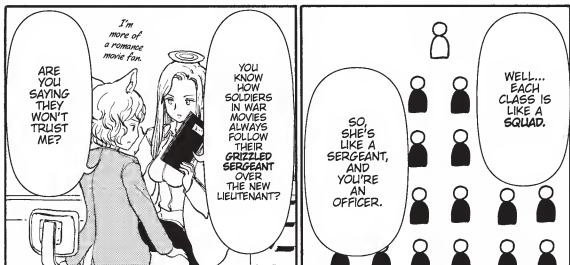
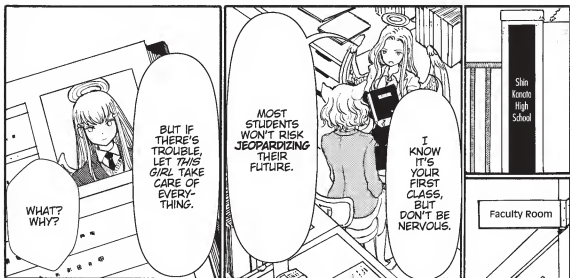


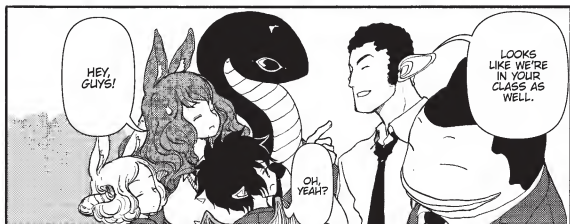
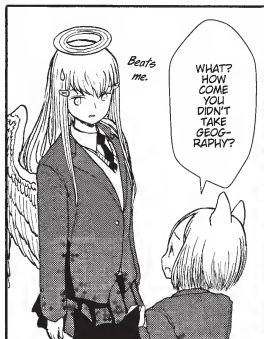


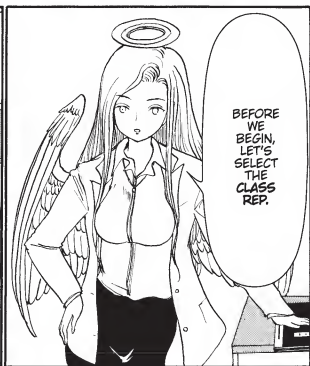
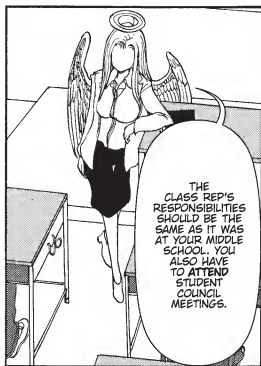
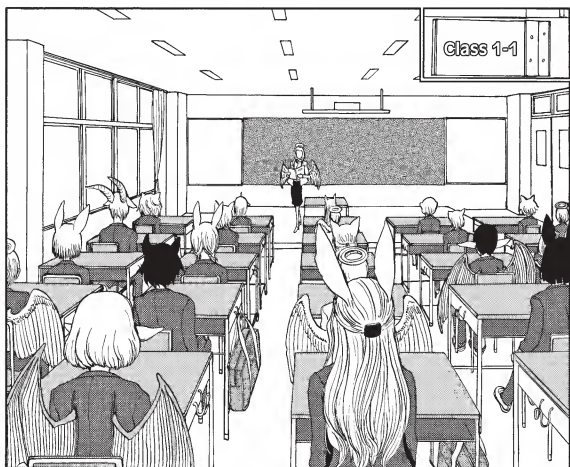


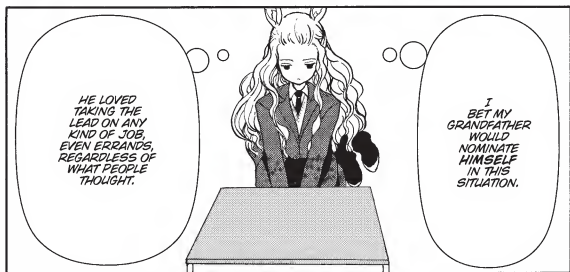
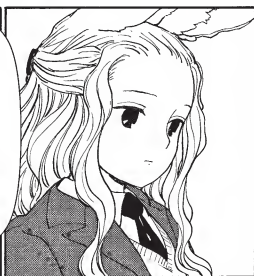
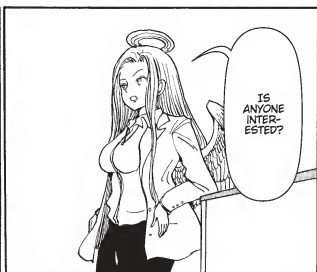
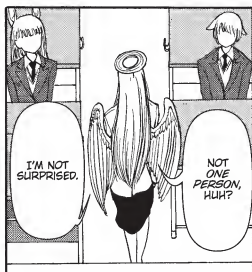


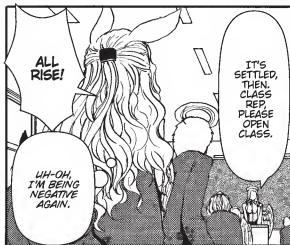
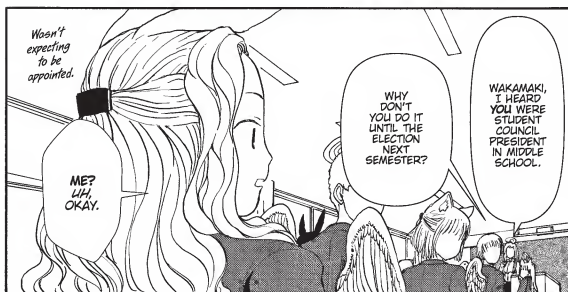




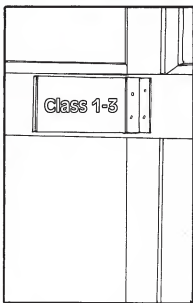
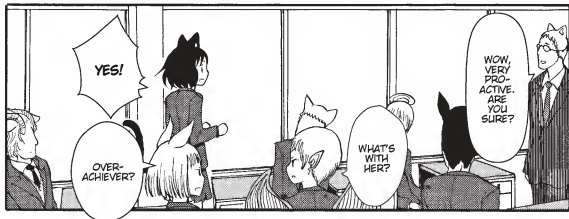
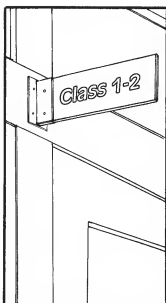


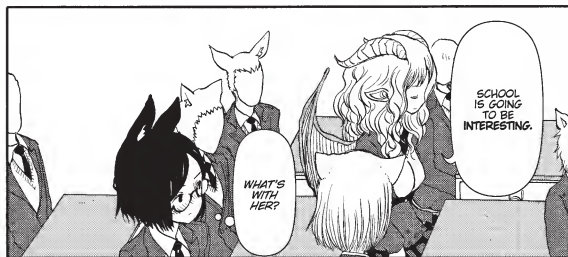












**A CentaUr's Life**

## UNDERSTANDING ANTARCTICANS: PART 2

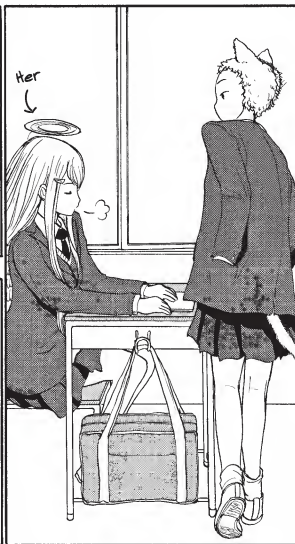
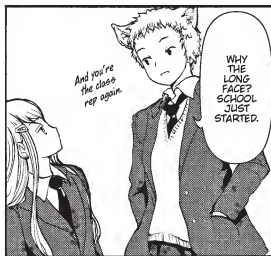
WE KNOW FROM AERIAL PHOTOS AND WITNESS TESTIMONY THAT ANTARCTICA IS COVERED BY ICE YEAR-ROUND. MUCH LIKE THE ICE-COVERED ARCTIC, THERE IS NO EVIDENT PLANT LIFE, BUT SOME HARDY LIFE FORMS STILL SEEM TO THRIVE. SOME TRAVELERS REPORT WITNESSING LARGE GROUPS OF AQUATIC, FLIGHTLESS BIRDS THAT STAND UP STRAIGHT AND TOTTER AROUND TO FORM A VAST HUDDLE ACROSS THE ICE. THESE STRANGE BIRDS, WHO SEEM TO HAVE NO FEAR OF HUMANS, ARE NOW KNOWN AS "PENGUINS." CAN WE SURMISE THAT THE ANTARCTICANS HUNTED THEM FOR CLOTHING, FOOD, FUEL, AND TOOLS, IN A LIFESTYLE SIMILAR TO THAT OF SOME ARCTIC PEOPLES? PERHAPS, BUT THAT MAY NOT FIT THE EVIDENCE. ACCORDING TO ANTARCTICANS, THEY PREFER A WARMER CLIMATE, AND HAVE BUILT UNDERGROUND CITIES POWERED BY GEOTHERMAL ENERGY. THERE IS SPECULATION THAT IN ORDER TO SOLVE THE RIDDLE, WE MAY NEED TO CONSIDER A TIME WHEN ANTARCTICA WAS NEITHER COVERED IN ICE NOR ISOLATED FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD.

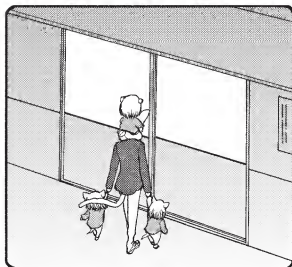


*Note: The Great Auk, which inhabited the Arctic, was once called a penguin. However, that name was later given to another species—the Antarctic Penguin—after the Great Auk became extinct in the 1840s. Antarctic Penguins bear a resemblance to the Great Auk, but they are a separate species.*

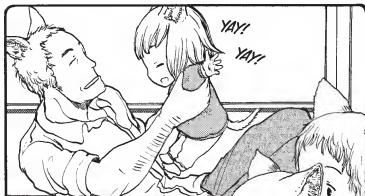
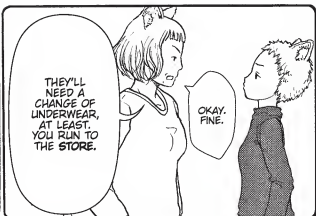
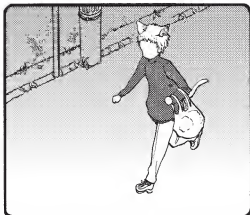


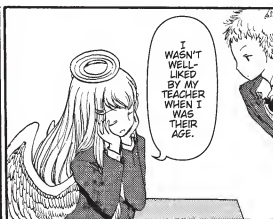
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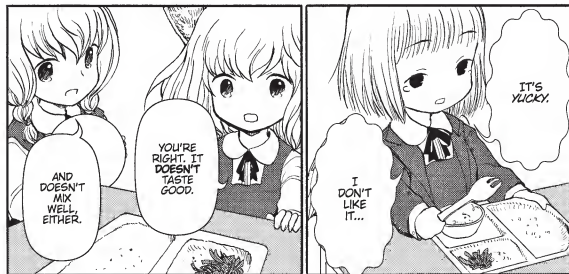


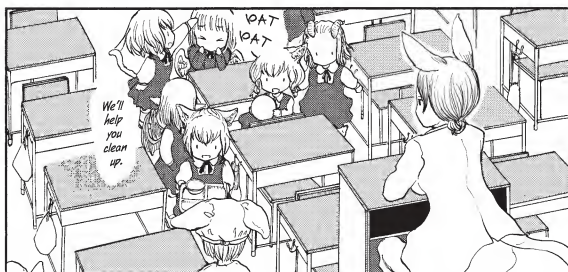
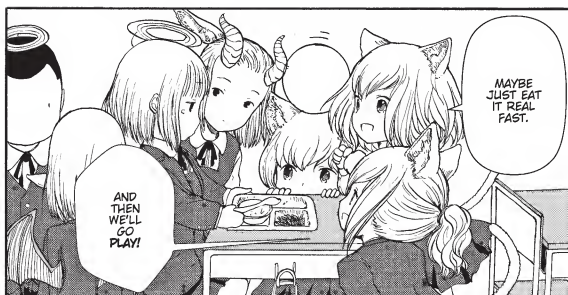


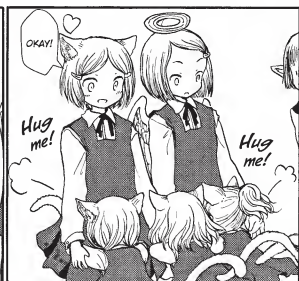
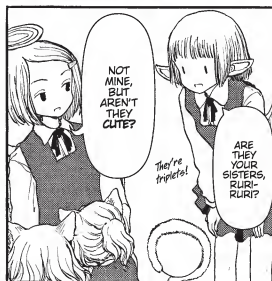
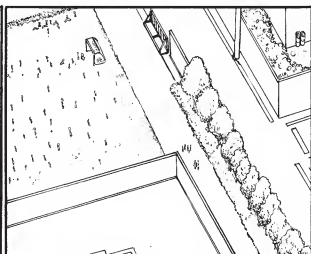
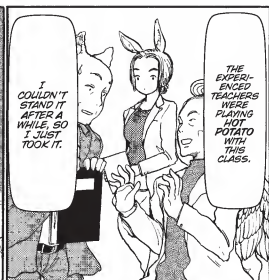


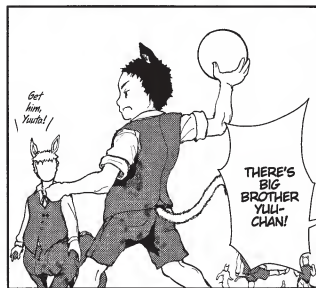




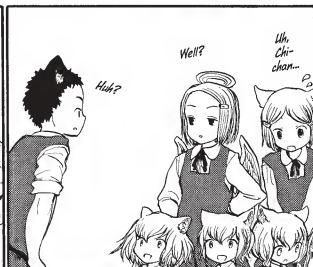




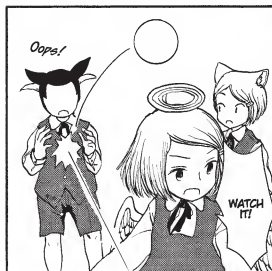
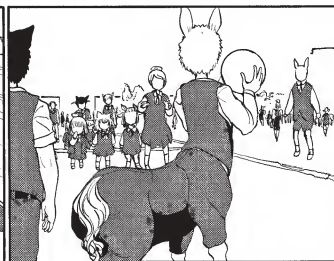
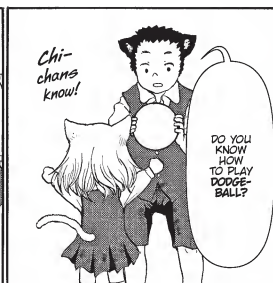
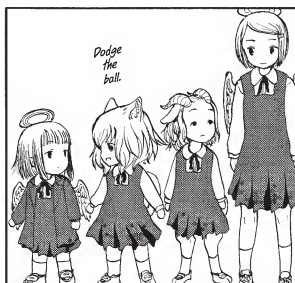


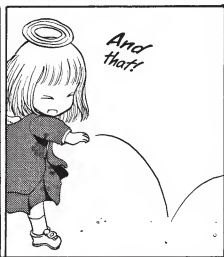
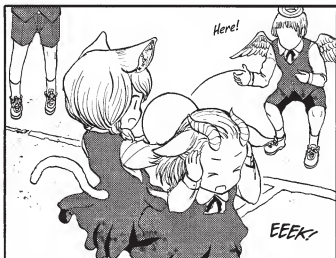
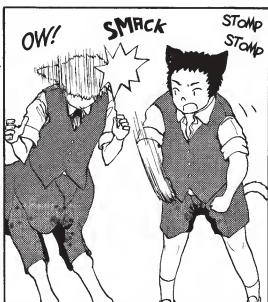


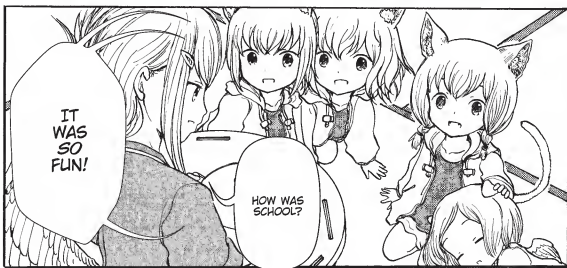
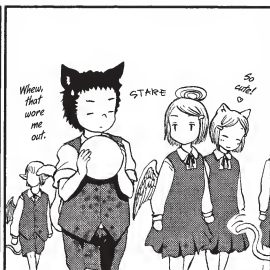








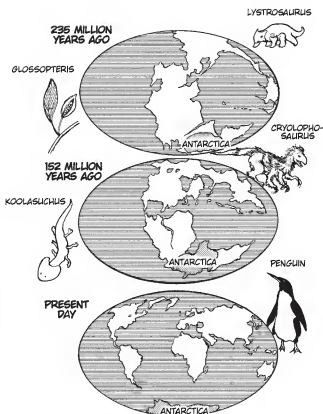


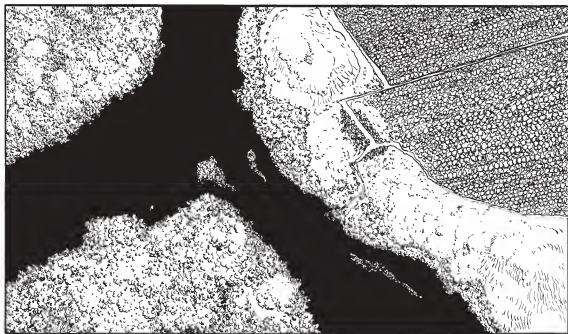


**A CentaUr's Life**

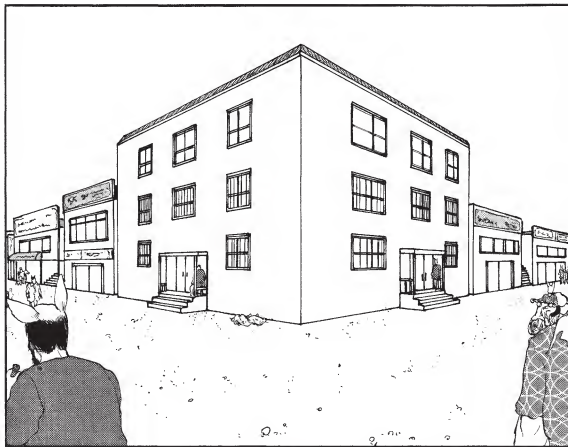
## UNDERSTANDING ANTARCTICANS: PART 3

DUE TO THE CONSTANT SLOW MOVEMENT OF TECTONIC PLATES, THE CONTINENT WE CALL ANTARCTICA HAS BEEN JOINING WITH AND SEPARATING FROM VARIOUS LARGER LANDMASSSES FOR HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF YEARS. AROUND 250 MILLION YEARS AGO, ALL THE CONTINENTS ON EARTH WERE JOINED AS ONE SINGLE SUPERCONTINENT KNOWN AS PANGAEA. AT THE TIME, MANY PLANTS AND ANIMALS SUCH AS *LYSTROSALIRUS* (A MAMMAL-LIKE REPTILE) AND *GLOSSOPTERIS* (A GYMNOSEPERM) THRIVED ACROSS PANGAEA, INCLUDING THE PART THAT WOULD LATER BECOME ANTARCTICA. FOSSIL REMAINS OF THESE LIFEFORMS LATER BECAME EVIDENCE FOR THE THEORY OF CONTINENTAL DRIFT. EVENTUALLY, THE SUPERCONTINENT BROKE APART INTO SMALLER LANDMASSSES, THE ONE KNOWN AS GONDWANA WAS MADE UP OF MOST OF THE LAND IN THE PRESENT SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE, AGAIN INCLUDING WHAT WOULD LATER BECOME ANTARCTICA, AND WAS FORESTED THROUGHOUT WITH A TROPICAL OR SUBTROPICAL CLIMATE. OVER TIME, THIS LANDMASS BROKE APART AS WELL, WITH AUSTRALIA AND THEN SOUTH AMERICA FINALLY PULLING AWAY TO COMPLETE ANTARCTICA'S ISOLATION, LONG AFTER THE DINOSAURS HAD GONE EXTINCT AND THE AGE OF MAMMALS HAD BEGUN. THE SEPARATION OF SOUTH AMERICA ALLOWED FOR THE ANTARCTIC CIRCUMPOLAR CURRENT TO FORM, AND THE FORESTS SPANNING THE CONTINENT SLOWLY GAVE WAY TO ICE. ONCE A LUSH TROPICAL LAND, ANTARCTICA HAS NOW BEEN LOCKED IN DEEP FREEZE FOR ABOUT 20 MILLION YEARS.

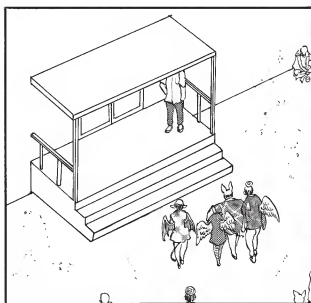


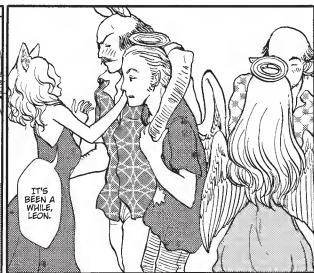
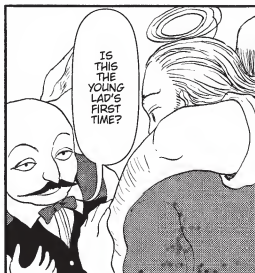


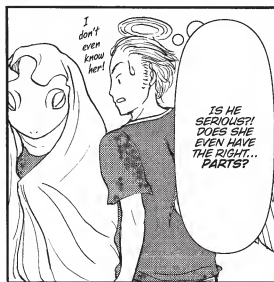
## CHAPTER 72

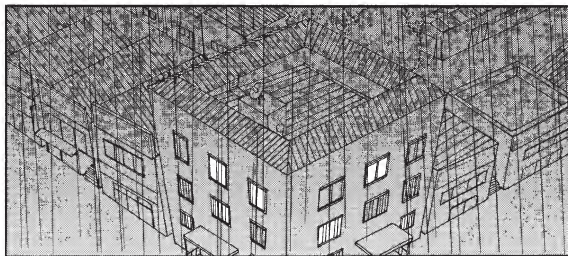
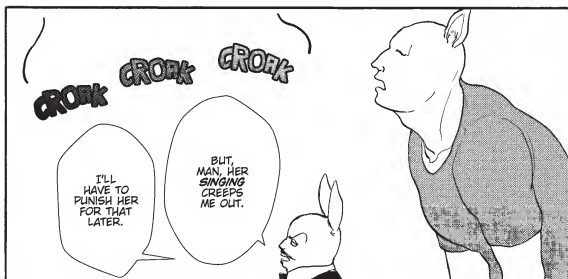
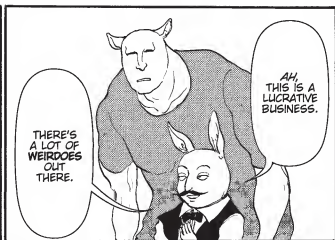
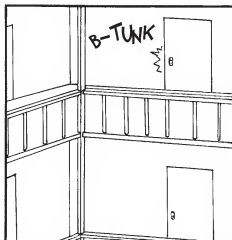


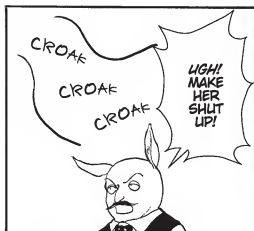


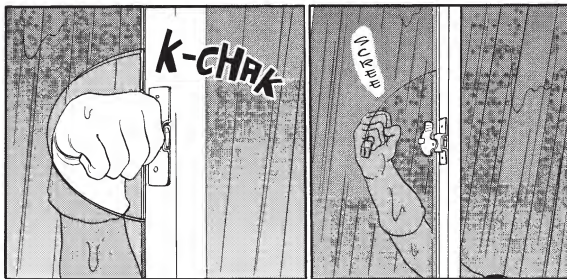
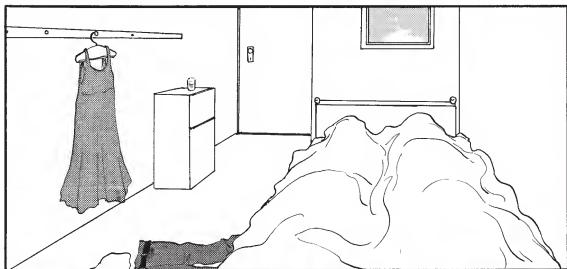
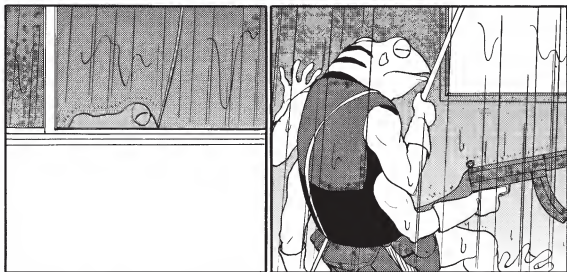




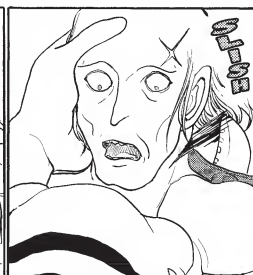
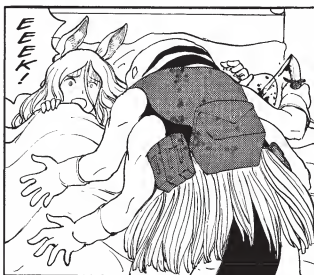
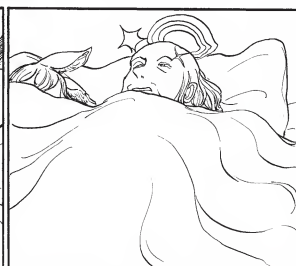
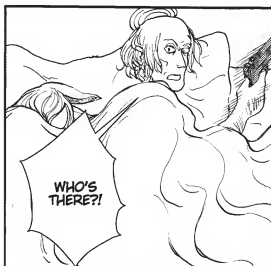
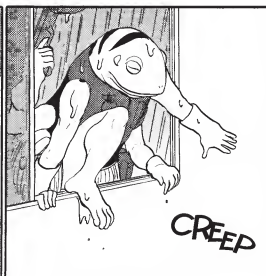
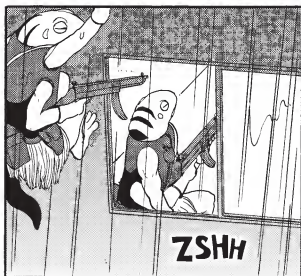




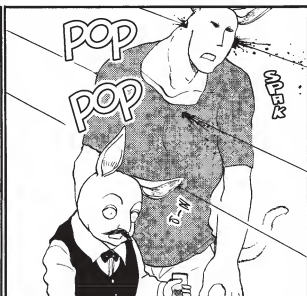
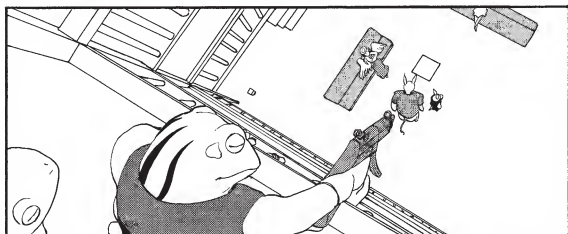


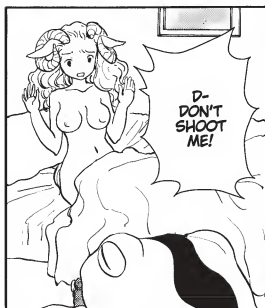
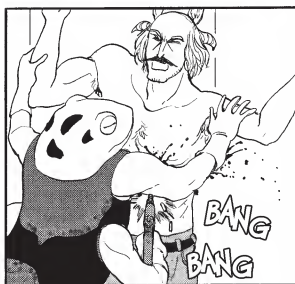
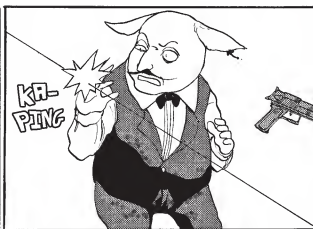
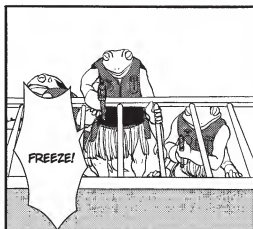


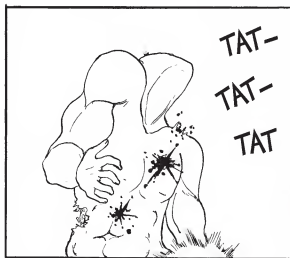
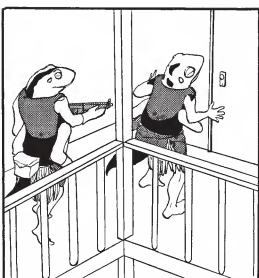
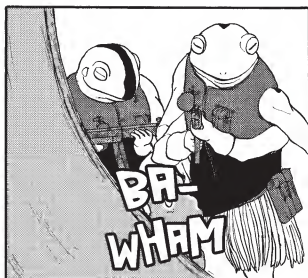


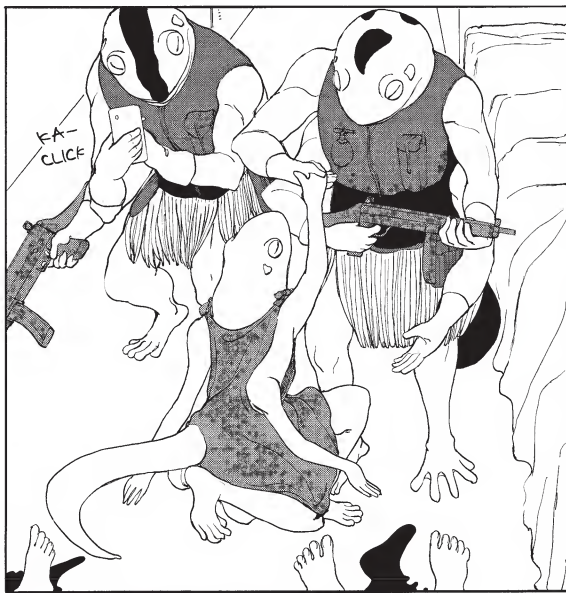


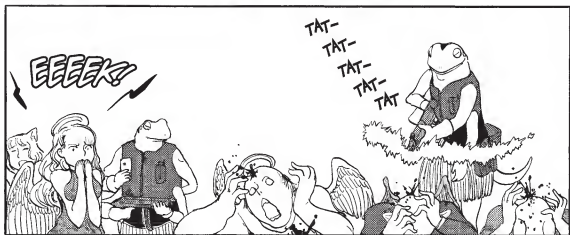
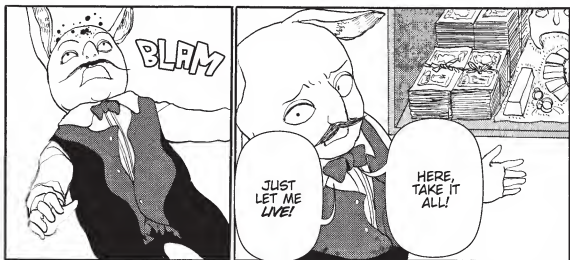
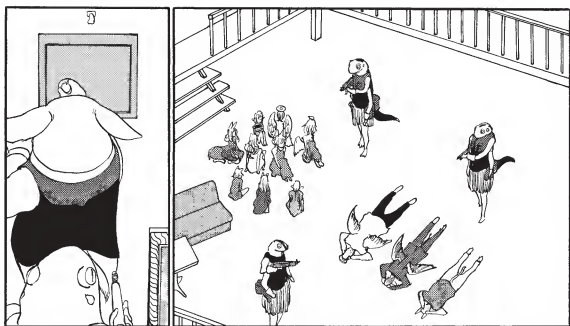


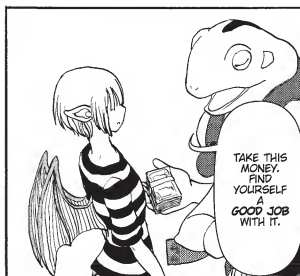
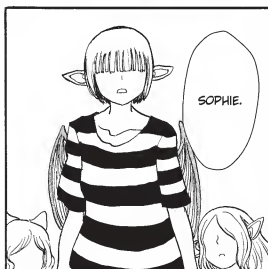
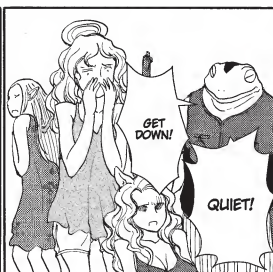


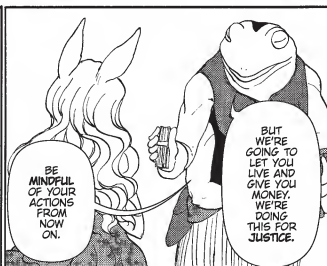
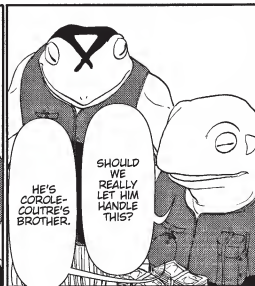
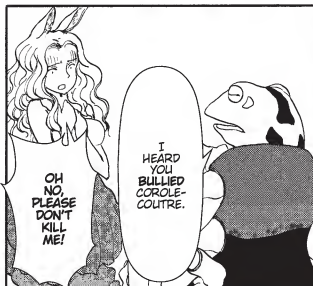
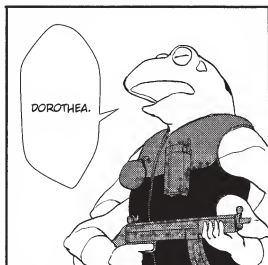




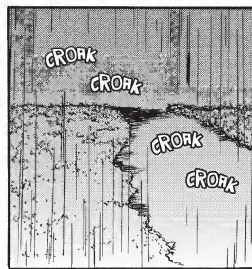
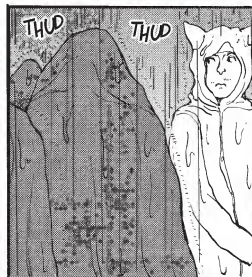
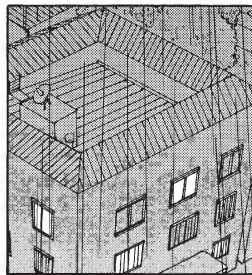
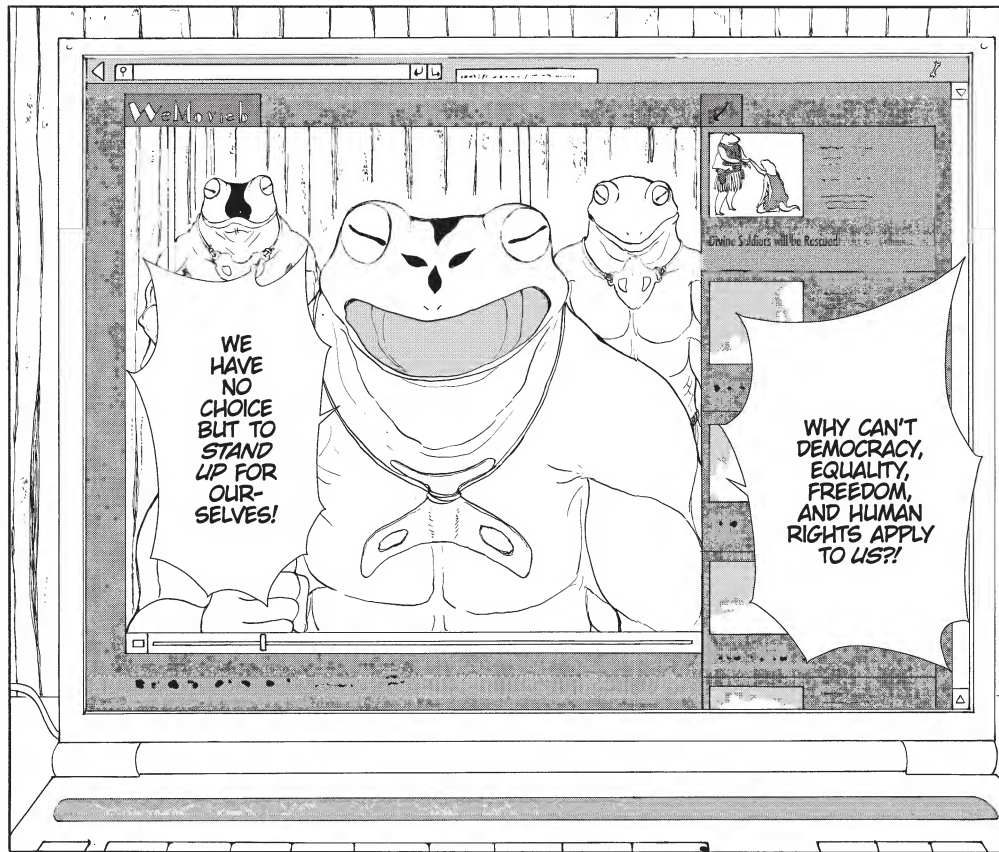


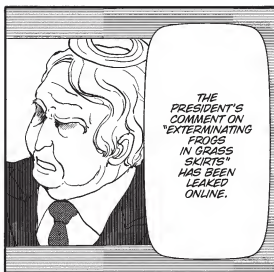








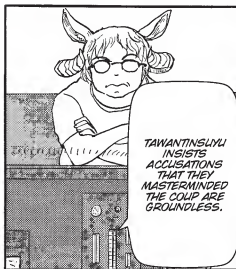




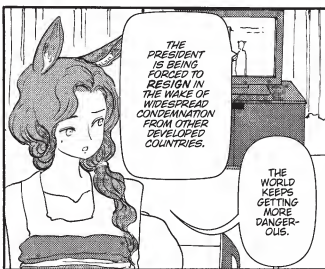
THE  
PRESIDENT'S  
COMMENT ON  
"EXTERMINATING  
FROGS  
IN GRASS  
SKIRTS"  
HAS BEEN  
LEAKED  
ONLINE.



AS THE  
AMPHIBIAN-  
FOLK  
CONTINUE TO  
OCCUPY THE  
UPSTREAM  
REGION OF  
RIVER A...



TAWANTINSUYU  
INSISTS  
ACCUSATIONS  
THAT THEY  
MASTERMINDED  
THE COUP ARE  
GROUNDLESS.



THE  
PRESIDENT  
IS BEING  
FORCED TO  
RESIGN IN  
THE WAKE OF  
WIDESPREAD  
CONDEMNATION  
FROM OTHER  
DEVELOPED  
COUNTRIES.

THE  
WORLD  
KEEPS  
GETTING  
MORE  
DANGER-  
OUS.



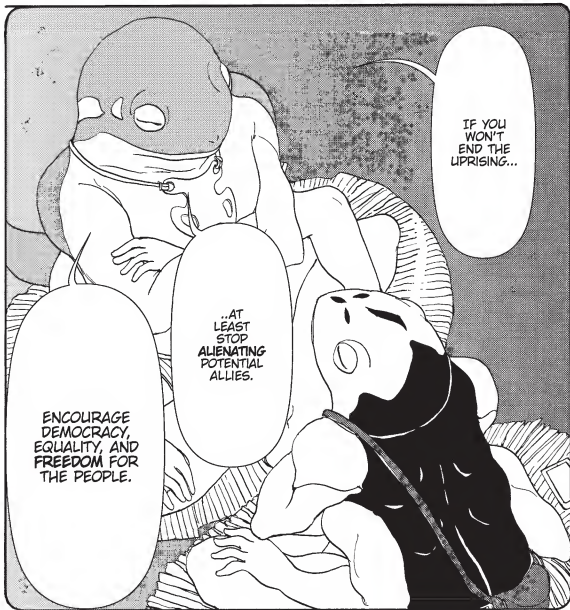
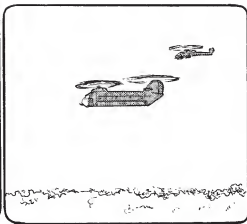
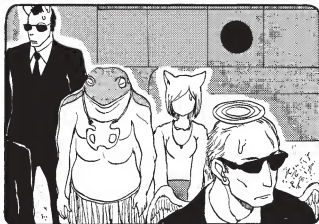
...I CAN  
PUT BOTH  
MY KIDS  
THROUGH  
COLLEGE  
WITHOUT  
LOANS.

IF I  
CAN  
MAKE  
IT BIG  
AGAIN...



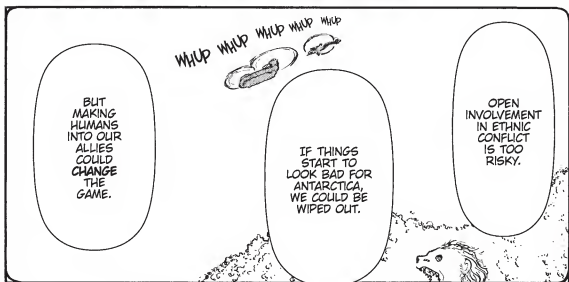
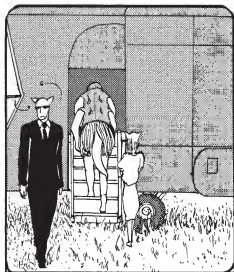
HMM.  
DOESN'T  
KYOKO  
HAVE AN  
ANTARCTICAN  
CLASSMATE?

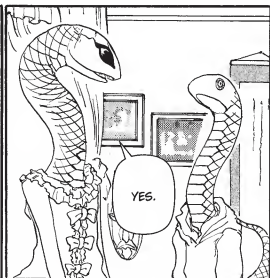
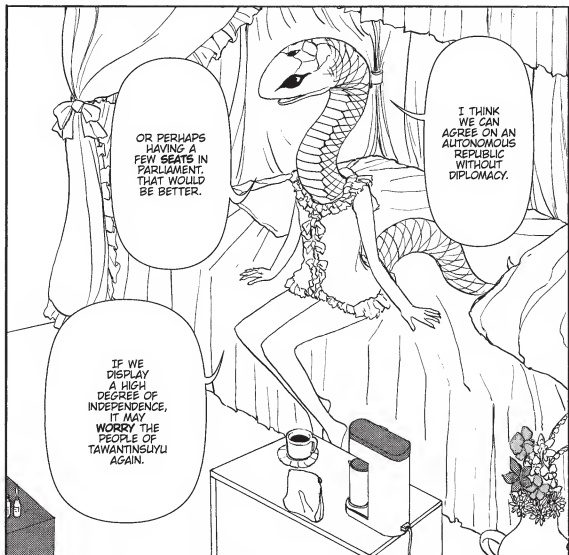
THERE'S  
BEEN  
ANTARCTICAN  
INFLUENCE  
IN THAT  
AREA FOR  
CENTURIES.

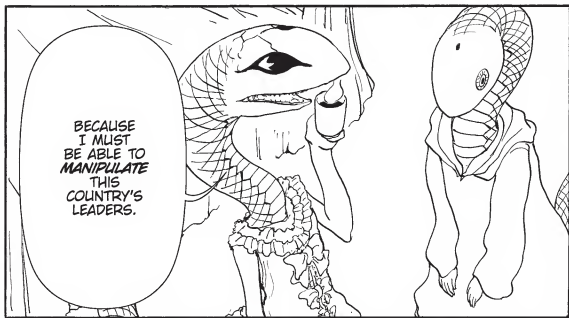
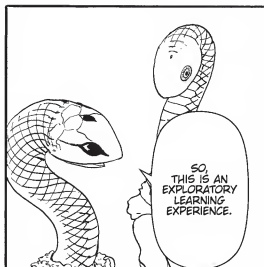
















I DON'T  
HAVE  
ANY.



BUT  
YOU  
CAN'T  
JUST  
WASTE  
TIME.

THAT'S  
WHY...



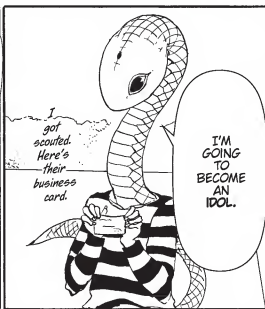
SO,  
NILNIS  
NILNEEF,  
WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING  
HERE?

WHAT  
ABOUT  
YOUR  
MISSION?  
YOUR  
ORDERS?



YOU  
CAN'T  
JUST  
DECIDE  
TO DO  
THAT.

FALSHUSH  
SAID  
IT WAS  
OKAY.



I  
got  
scouted.  
Here's  
their  
business  
card.

I'M  
GOING  
TO  
BECOME  
AN  
IDOL.

**A CentaUr's Life**

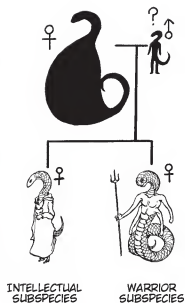
## UNDERSTANDING ANTARCTICANS: PART 4

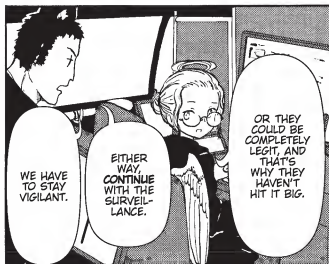
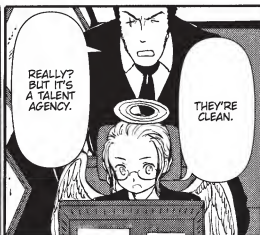
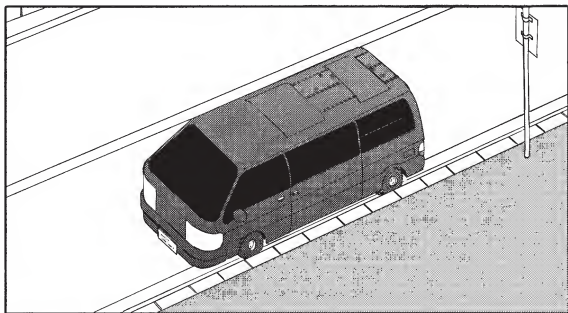
WE DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO MEDICAL RECORDS OR AUTOPSY REPORTS FOR ANTARCTICANS, AND THIS COUPLED WITH THEIR SECRECY MEANS THAT WE DON'T HAVE MUCH SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR PHYSIOLOGY. WE CAN SPECULATE, HOWEVER, BASED ON THEIR OBSERVABLE CHARACTERISTICS AND THE SPOTTY INFORMATION WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO GLEAN FROM ANTARCTICANS THEMSELVES AND PEOPLE WHO HAVE INTERACTED WITH THEM.

ANTARCTICANS WERE PREVIOUSLY CALLED "ANTARCTIC SNAKE PEOPLE," WHICH IS NOW CONSIDERED IMPOLITE. THEY WERE OFTEN CAST AS MONSTERS IN LOW-BUDGET HORROR MOVIES, BUT THAT KIND OF TYPECASTING LIKELY LED TO INCORRECT PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS.

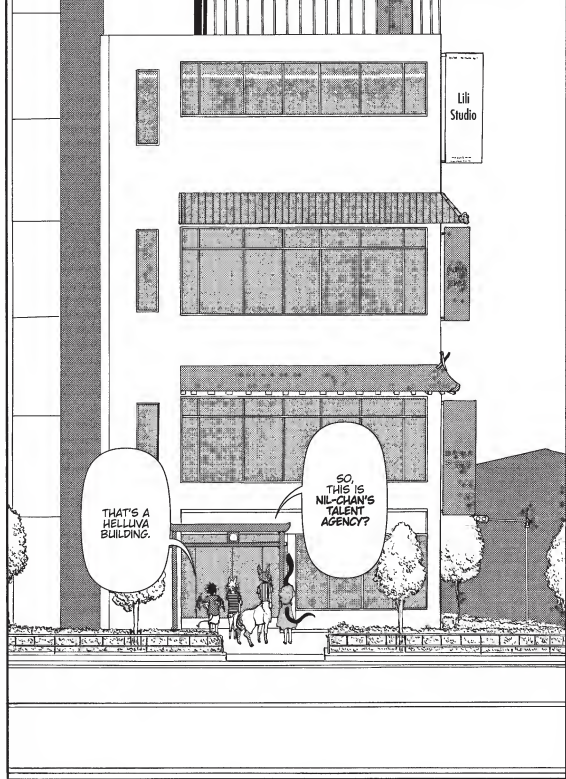
WE CURRENTLY CLASSIFY ANTARCTICANS INTO TWO SUBSPECIES KNOWN AS INTELLECTUAL AND WARRIOR. THE INTELLECTUAL SUBSPECIES IS GENERALLY PHYSICALLY SMALLER, HAS ONLY A SINGLE PAIR OF ARMS, AND IS BIPEDAL WITH A TAIL. THE WARRIOR SUBSPECIES IS GENERALLY LARGER AND MORE MUSCULAR, HAS TWO PAIRS OF ARMS, AND THE ENTIRE LOWER BODY RESEMBLES THAT OF A SNAKE. DESPITE THE DIFFERENCES IN THE LOWER BODY, BOTH SUBSPECIES STAND AND MOVE UPRIGHT. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, ALL ANTARCTICANS ARE FEMALE AND ARE CONSIDERED CHILDREN OF THE "QUEEN." THIS KIND OF EUSOCIAL STRUCTURE HAS BEEN OBSERVED IN MAMMALS AND INSECTS (I.E. NAKED MOLE RATS, ANTS, BEES AND TERMITES), BUT NOT AMONG REPTILES—THOUGH, IT IS UNCERTAIN WHETHER ANTARCTICANS TRULY BELONG TO THAT GROUP, ALTHOUGH THEIR APPEARANCE STRONGLY IMPLIES RELATION TO DIAPSID, OTHER EVIDENCE MAKES IT UNLIKELY THAT THEY SHARE THE COLD-BLOODED TRAIT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE HIGH LEVEL OF INTELLIGENCE THAT THEY EXHIBIT DEMANDS A STABLE TEMPERATURE IN THEIR BRAINS, AND THE WARMTH IN THEIR HANDSHAKES IS CLEARLY INDICATIVE OF A HOMEOTHERMIC NATURE. THERE IS A CONVINCING THEORY, HOWEVER, THAT DINOSAURS MAY HAVE BEEN HOMEOTHERMIC; THEIR DESCENDANTS, MODERN BIRDS, ARE CERTAINLY KNOWN TO BE HOMEOTHERMIC AS WELL. THE ANCESTOR OF THE ALLIGATOR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN AN ACTIVE FOUR-CHAMBERED HOMEOTHERMIC QUADRUPED, WITH MODERN ALLIGATORS HAVING DIVERGED FROM THEIR ANCESTORS DUE TO A REVERSION TO AN AQUATIC HABITAT AND A PREDATORY NATURE.

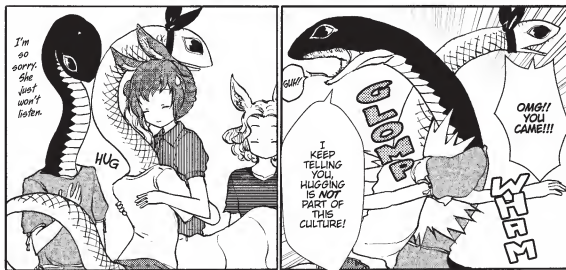
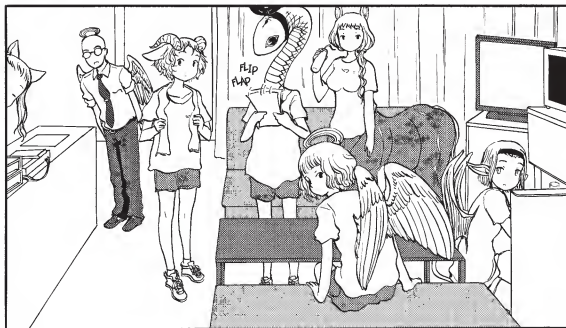
ALTHOUGH ANTARCTICANS ARE CALLED SNAKEFOLK, THEY CANNOT BE CLASSIFIED INTO THE GROUP OF SCALED REPTILES THAT MODERN SNAKES AND LIZARDS BELONG TO. WE BELIEVE THAT THEY INSTEAD BELONG TO THE ARCHOSAUR FAMILY, WHICH INCLUDES ALLIGATORS, DINOSAURS, AND SIMILAR CREATURES. HOWEVER, THEIR PHYSICAL STRUCTURE IS NOT DEMONSTRATIVE OF THEIR RELATION TO DINOSAURS.

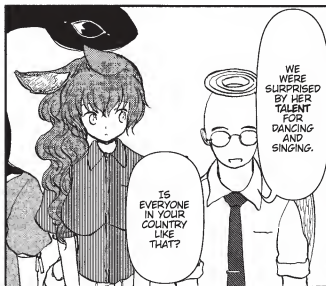




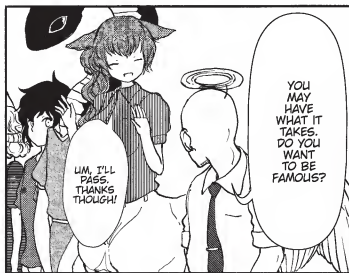
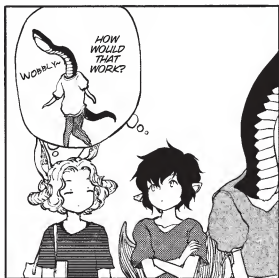
# CHAPTER 73

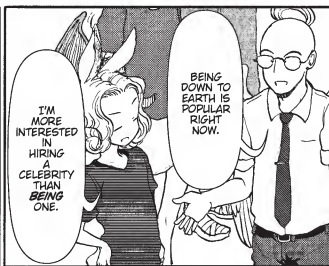
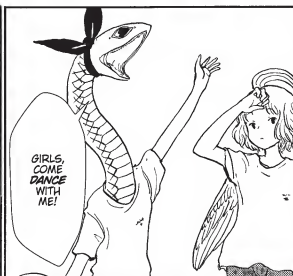
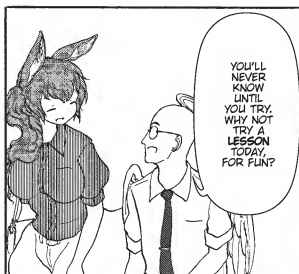


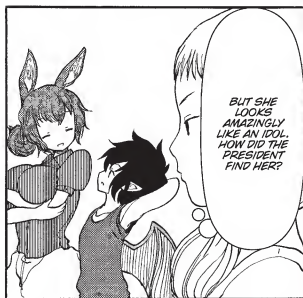


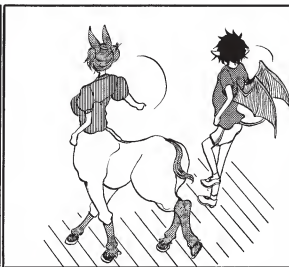


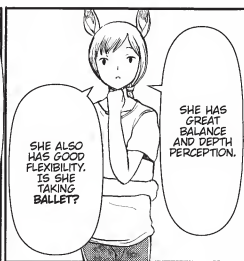


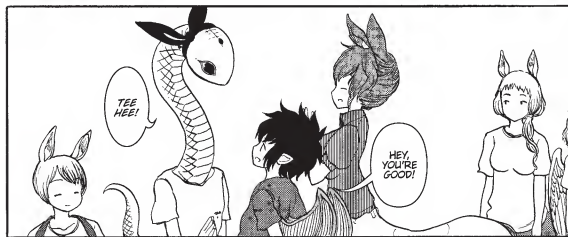
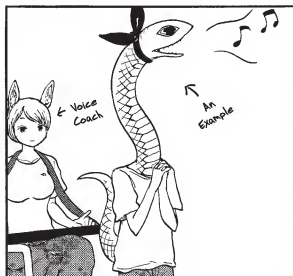


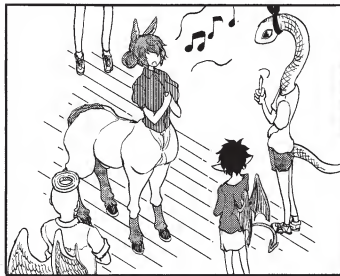




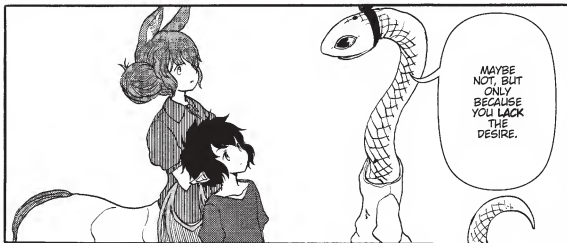


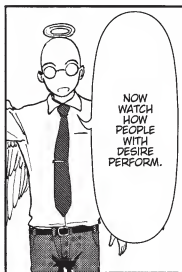
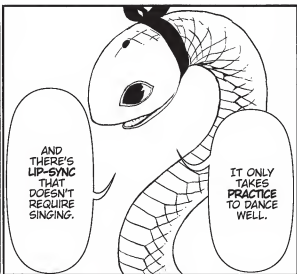
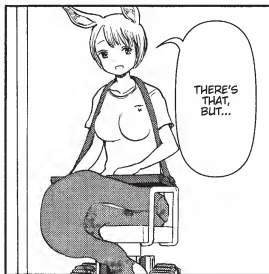




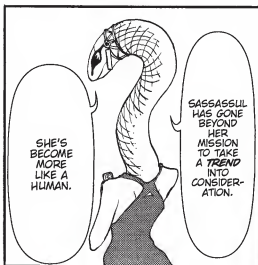












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## UNDERSTANDING ANTARCTICANS: PART 5

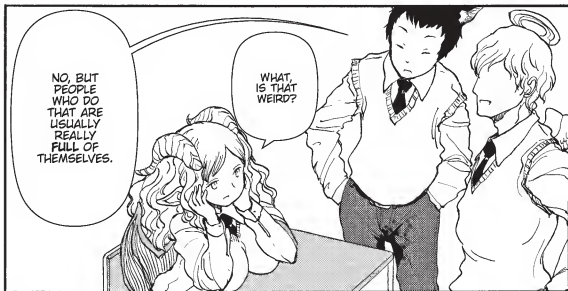
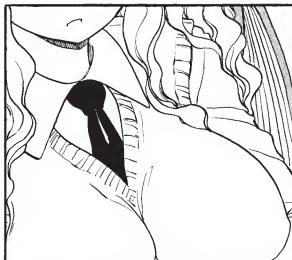
THE ANTARCTICAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE SEEMS TO SHARE EUSOCIAL TRAITS WITH CREATURES LIKE ANTS AND BEES, SUCH AS THE COOPERATIVE REARING OF YOUNG AND WHAT APPEARS TO BE AN OVERWHELMINGLY FEMALE SOCIETY IN WHICH ONLY THE QUEEN REPRODUCES. IT'S IMPORTANT TO NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT ANTARCTICANS DO SEEM TO HAVE A MUCH GREATER SENSE OF INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY THAN IS EXHIBITED BY OTHER EUSOCIAL CREATURES. THOUGH HUMANS MAY PERCEIVE THEIR SOCIETY AS RIGID AND TOTALITARIAN, WE CANNOT DENY THAT MEMBERS OF THE INTELLECTUAL SUBSPECIES HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT THEY THINK AS INDIVIDUALS AND OPERATE AT THEIR OWN DISCRETION, EVEN GOING SO FAR AS TO SHOW EMOTION, ALBEIT INFREQUENTLY. (OF COURSE, ANTS AND BEES MAY ALSO HAVE THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL MINDS OR EMOTIONS, BUT WE HAVE NO WAY TO KNOW.) GIVEN THAT ALL ANTARCTICANS THAT INTERACT WITH HUMANS ARE IN DIPLOMATIC ROLES, WE CAN ASSUME THAT THEY ARE PURSUING A UNIFIED PURPOSE FOR THEIR GOVERNMENT; IT'S POSSIBLE THAT WE PERCEIVE THEM AS TOTALITARIAN BECAUSE WE ONLY SEE ONE FACET OF THEIR CIVILIZATION. THEY COULD BE JUST AS INDIVIDUALISTIC AS HUMANS.

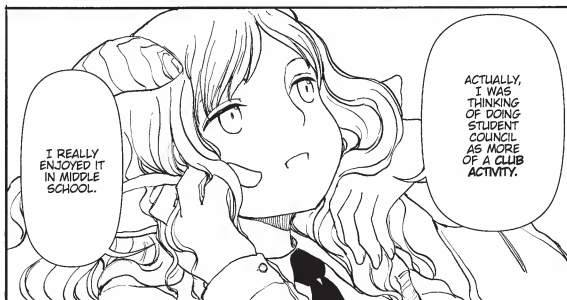


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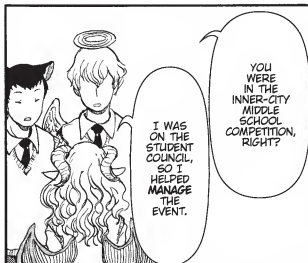
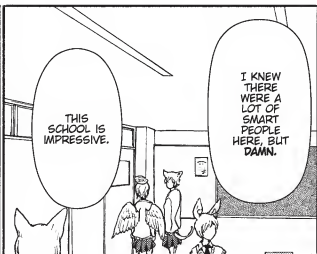
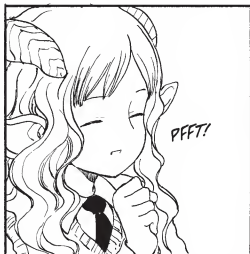


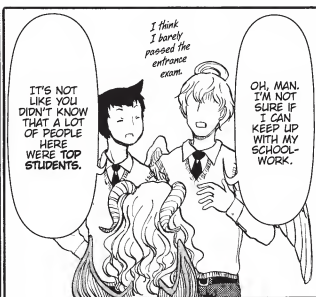


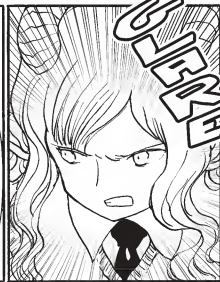
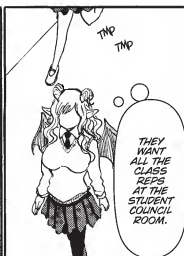
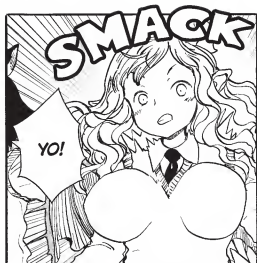


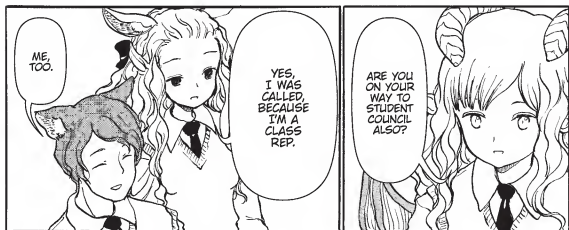
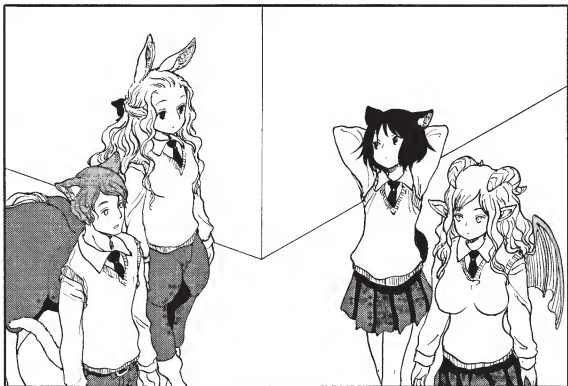




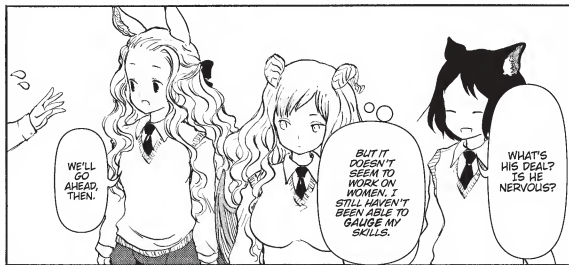


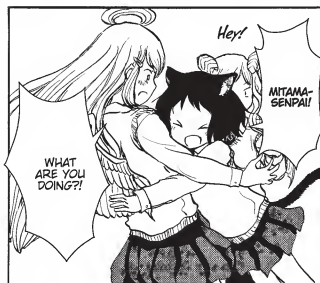
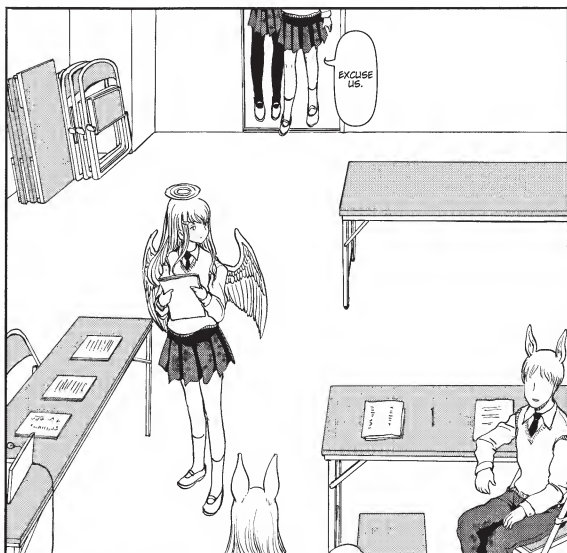


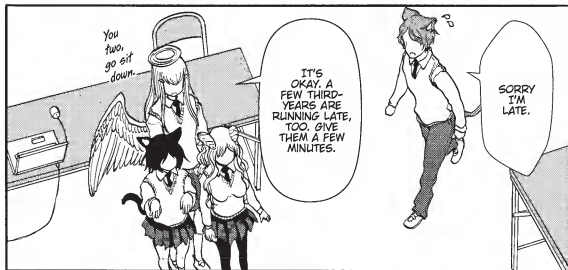
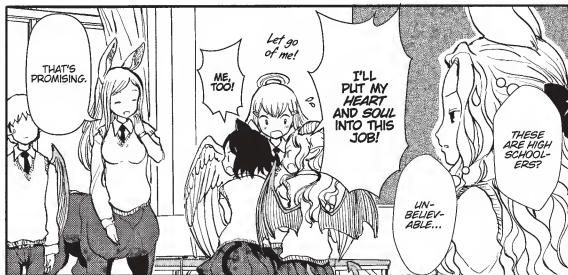


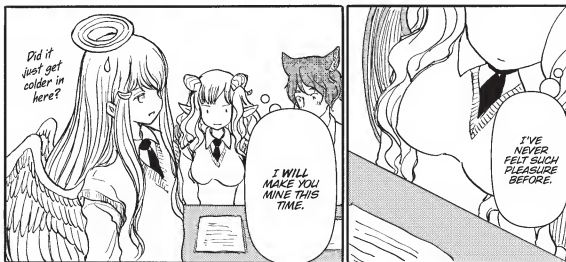
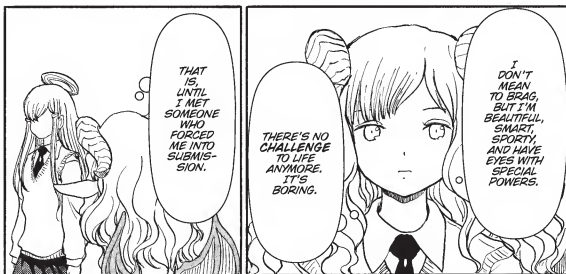










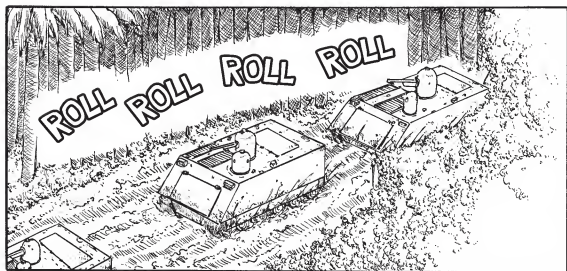


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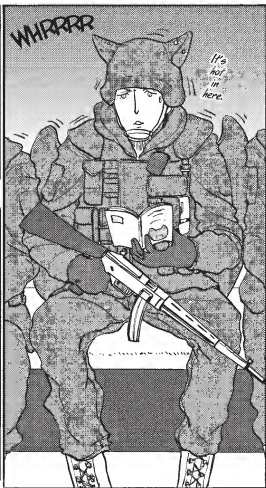
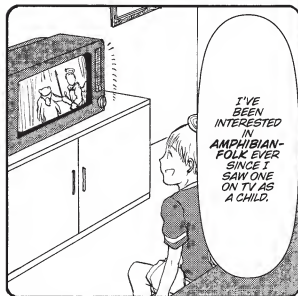
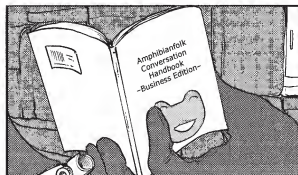
## UNDERSTANDING ANTARCTICANS: PART 6

AN CONTRAST TO THE INDIVIDUALITY SHOWN BY THEIR COUNTERPARTS, MEMBERS OF THE WARRIOR SUBSPECIES SEEM FAR MORE COLLECTIVIST: THEY'VE BEEN OBSERVED FOLLOWING ORDERS FROM THE INTELLECTUAL SUBSPECIES; THEY NEVER COMPLAIN OR DISOBEY; THEY SHOW NO VISIBLE SIGNS OF EMOTION OR WILL. IT'S CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THEY'RE NOT JUST ROBOTS—EACH INDIVIDUAL MAKES HER OWN DECISIONS ON HOW TO EXECUTE ORDERS AND CARRIES OUT NONSPECIFIC TASKS USING HER OWN AUTONOMOUS THOUGHT AND JUDGMENT. THIS MAY LEAD SOME TO THINK OF THEM AS SLAVES, BUT IT IS UNWISE TO APPLY OUR IDEOLOGY TO OTHER CIVILIZATIONS. WE LIVE IN AN ENLIGHTENED ERA THAT DOES NOT PERMIT SUCH UNCIVILIZED BEHAVIOR AS FORCING OTHER RACES TO CONFORM TO OUR STANDARDS, AS WE DID IN CENTURIES PAST. REGARDLESS, THE COMPARISON IS UNFAIR, AS HUMAN SLAVES CLEARLY HAVE EMOTION AND INTENTION WHERE THE ANTARCTICAN WARRIOR SUBSPECIES HAS SHOWN NONE.





## CHAPTER 75







I  
STUDIED  
THE  
AMPHIBIAN-  
FOLK AND  
LEARNED  
SOME OF  
THEIR  
LANGUAGE.



UNTIL NOW,  
ANY BOOKS  
THAT PAINTED  
AMPHIBIANFOLK AS  
AN INTELLIGENT  
RACE WERE BANNED  
IN THIS COUNTRY.  
BUT FOREIGN  
BOOKS BECAME  
EASILY OBTAINABLE  
WITH THE  
POPULARITY OF  
THE INTERNET.



ARE YOU  
STUDYING  
IN A PLACE  
LIKE THIS,  
KID?

IT  
CONVINCED  
ME THAT  
THEY'RE  
JUST AS  
INTELLIGENT  
AS WE  
ARE.



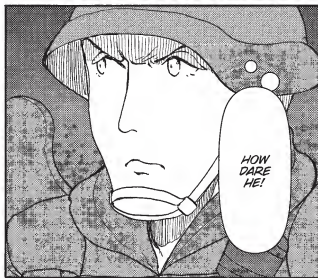
I WAS  
MOVED  
WHEN I  
WAS ABLE  
TO MEET  
THEM.

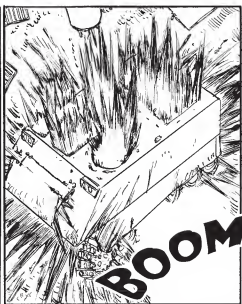
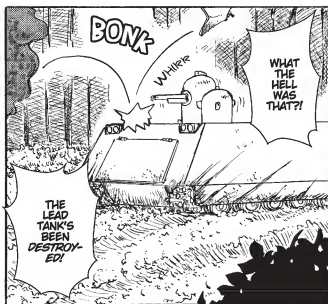
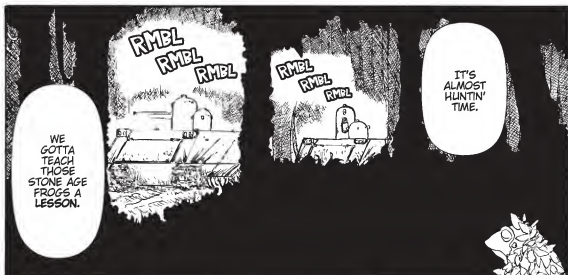
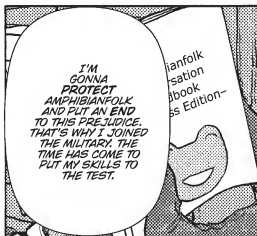
I  
HELPED  
A  
TRADER  
HEADING  
TO A  
RURAL  
AREA.

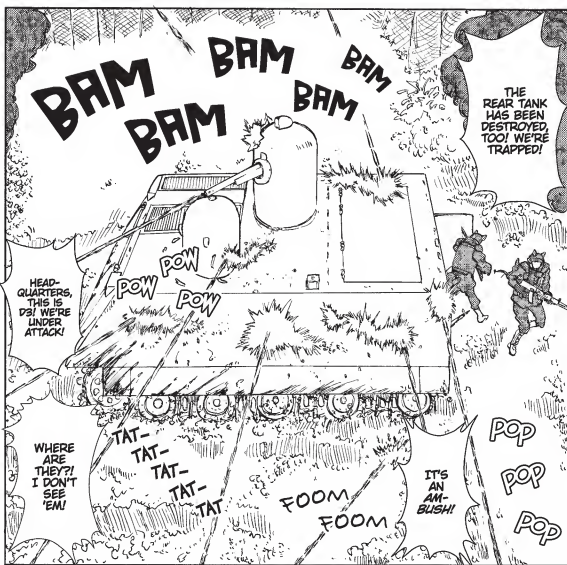
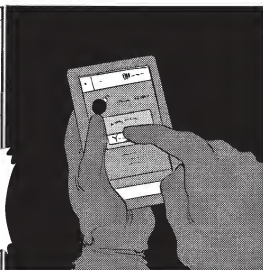
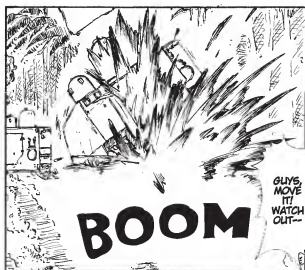


THEY'RE  
JUST  
FROGS  
THAT  
THROW  
ROCKS.

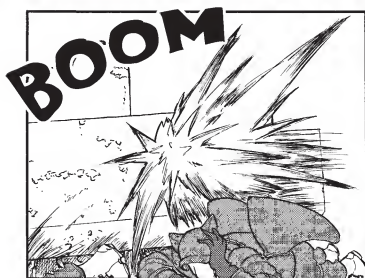
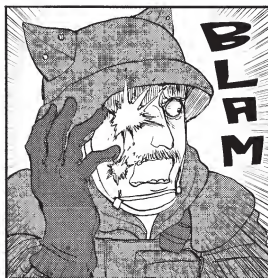
YOU  
DON'T  
NEED TO  
READ  
UP ON  
THEM.

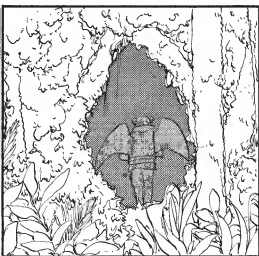
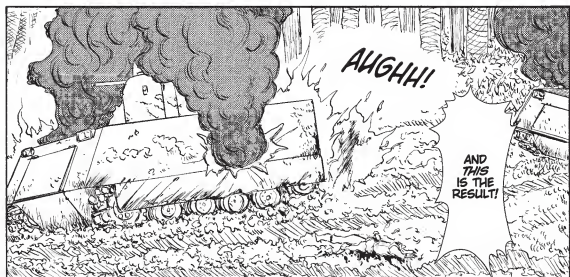


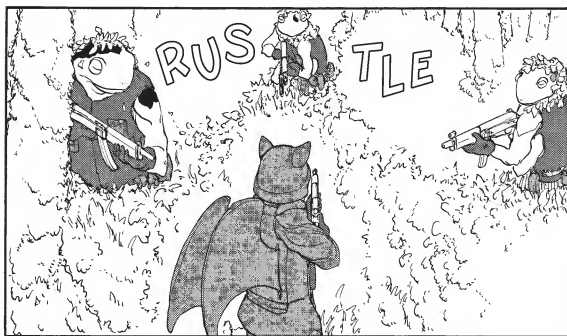














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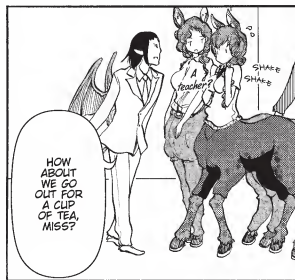
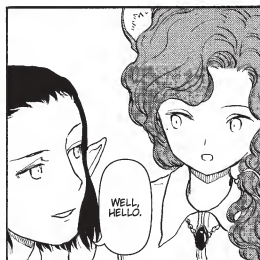
## UNDERSTANDING ANTARCTICANS: PART 7

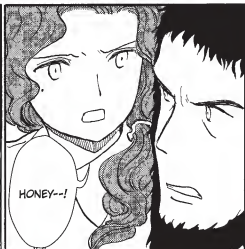
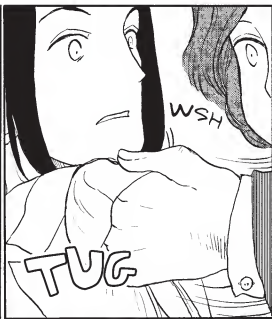
THE PHYSICAL ABILITIES OF ANTARCTICANS ARE VERY DIFFERENT DEPENDING ON SUBSPECIES. THE INTELLECTUAL SUBSPECIES DISPLAYS A LEVEL OF PHYSICAL APTITUDE ROUGHLY EQUIVALENT TO A PERSON WITH A FAIRLY SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE, BUT WHETHER THIS INDICATES A NEGLECT OF THEIR HEALTH OR RESULTS IN ANY MEDICAL PROBLEMS IS UNKNOWN. THE ANTARCTICANS GO TO EXTREMES TO KEEP OUTSIDERS FROM ACCESSING THIS AND OTHER INFORMATION, PREVENTING US FROM EXPANDING OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR RACE. SOME HAVE SPECULATED THAT SINCE NO ANTARCTICANS WITH OBVIOUS INFIRMITY OR DISABILITY HAVE BEEN ENCOUNTERED BY HUMANS, THEIR RACE MAY HAVE ADVANCED MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY, A GENETIC PREDISPOSITION FOR GOOD HEALTH, OR EVEN SOME UNKNOWN TECHNIQUE TO PROMOTE WELLNESS. ASIDE FROM THEIR APPARENT PHYSICAL INABILITY TO CHEW (AND LACK OF FOOD PREFERENCES, ALLERGIES, AND INTOLERANCES), THEIR DIET AND CONSUMPTION IS SIMILAR TO THAT OF HUMANS. THESE DIFFERENCES SUGGEST THE STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT THEY OBSERVE MEALTIME CUSTOMS AND RITUALS AND THAT THEY SWALLOW FOOD WHOLE, BUT WE DON'T KNOW IF OR HOW THEY DIGEST WHAT THEY CONSUME. THERE HAVE BEEN NO KNOWN ANTARCTICAN DEATHS FROM POISONS, WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT INDICATE SOME DEGREE OF TOLERANCE. THEY'RE QUITE SENSITIVE TO COLD DESPITE LIVING IN ANTARCTICA, BUT EXHIBIT A HIGH TOLERANCE TO HEAT AND HUMIDITY, WHICH MAY BE INDICATIVE OF CONDITIONS IN THEIR UNDERGROUND CITY.

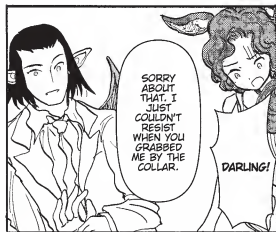
THE WARRIOR SUBSPECIES SHOWS EXCEPTIONAL PHYSICAL PROWESS AND SENSORY ACUITY. THIS WAS PROVEN BY AN INCIDENT IN CANADA THAT INVOLVED AN ARMED, PSYCHOTIC MAN WHO BELIEVED A CLICHÉ CONSPIRACY THEORY ABOUT REPTILIANS MANIPULATING THE HUMAN WORLD. MEMBERS OF THE WARRIOR SUBSPECIES WHO WERE ACTING AS BODYGUARDS SENSED THE DANGER LONG BEFORE ANY HUMANS DID, AND MANAGED TO APPREHEND THE MAN BEFORE HE TRIED TO PULL THE TRIGGER.



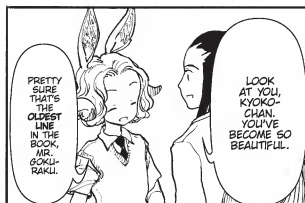
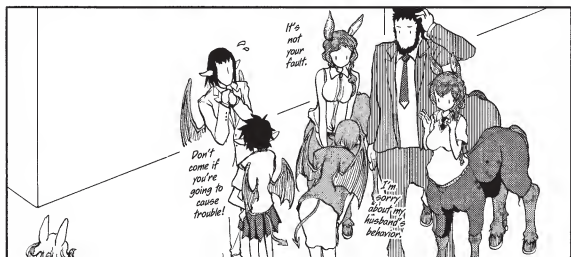
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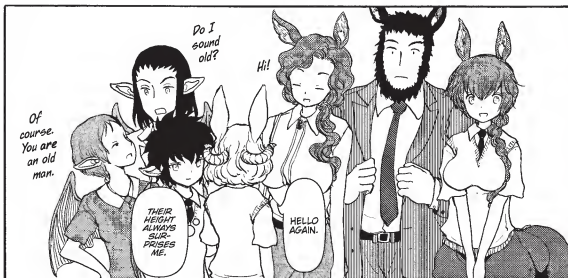


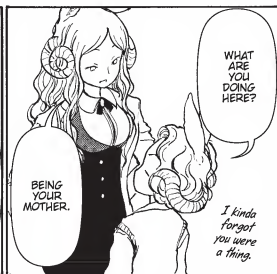
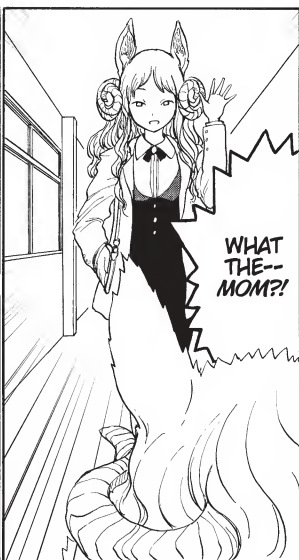


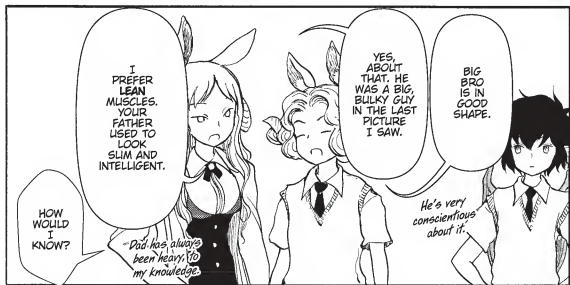
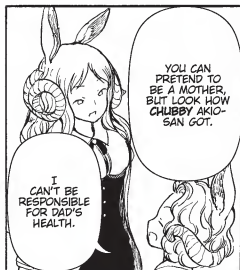
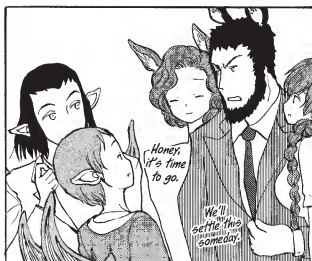


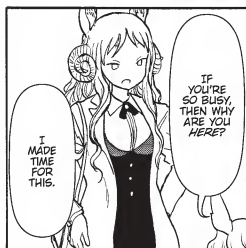
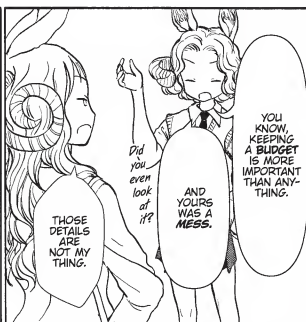


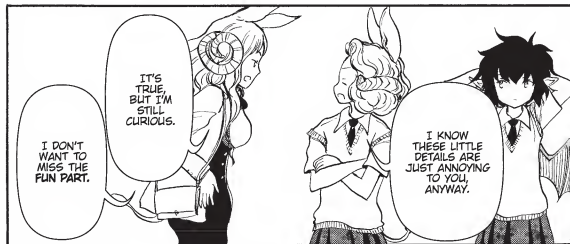
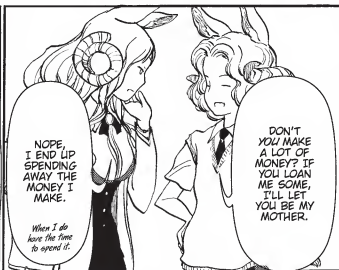


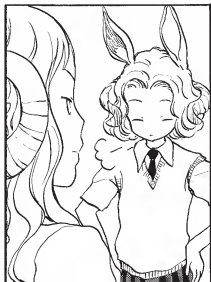






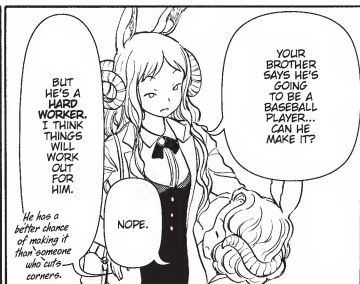






BUT HE'S A  
HARD  
WORKER.  
I THINK  
THINGS  
WILL  
WORK  
OUT  
FOR  
HIM.

*He has a  
better chance  
of making it  
than someone  
who cuts  
corners.*

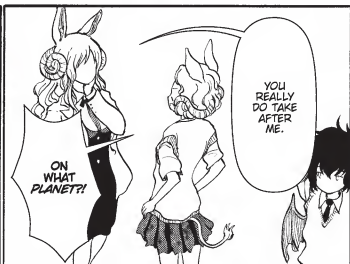


YOUR  
BROTHER  
SAYS HE'S  
GOING  
TO BE A  
BASEBALL  
PLAYER...  
CAN HE  
MAKE IT?

NOPE.

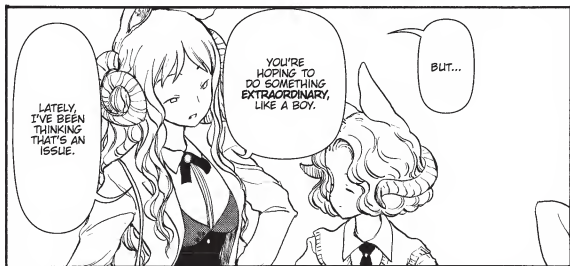


I  
THINK  
YOU'RE  
MATURE  
FOR  
YOUR  
AGE.



ON  
WHAT  
PLANET?!

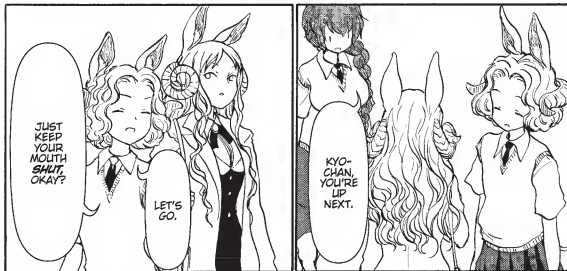
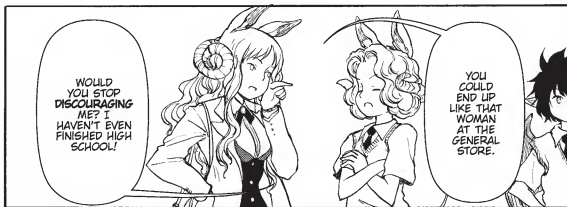
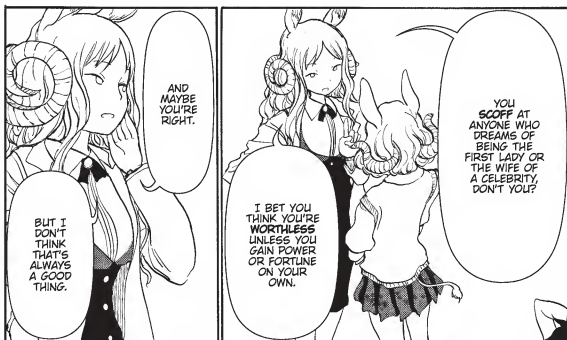
YOU  
REALLY  
DO TAKE  
AFTER  
ME.



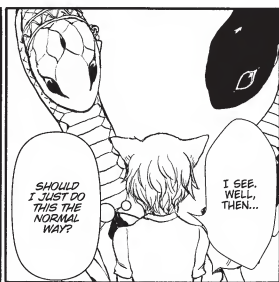
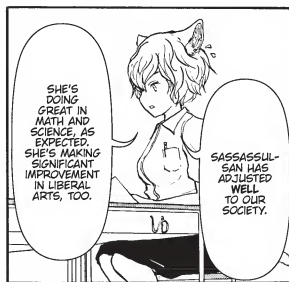
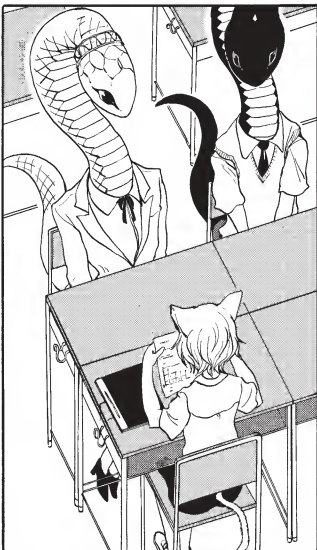
LATELY,  
I'VE BEEN  
THINKING  
THAT'S AN  
ISSUE.

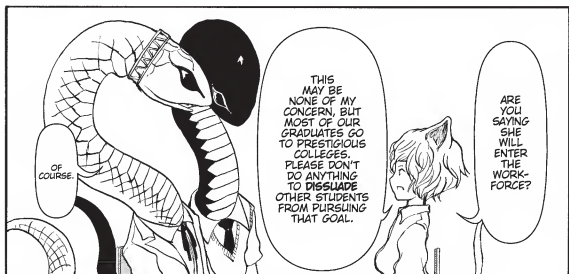
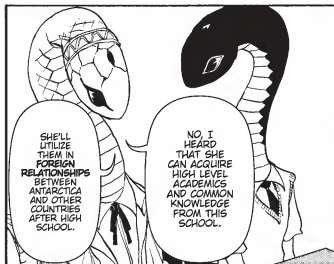
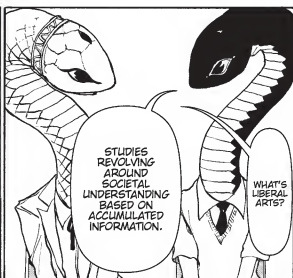
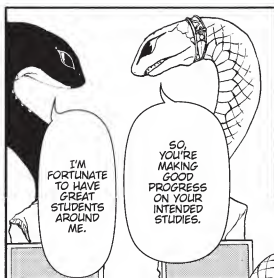
YOU'RE  
HOPING TO  
DO SOMETHING  
EXTRAORDINARY,  
LIKE A BOY.

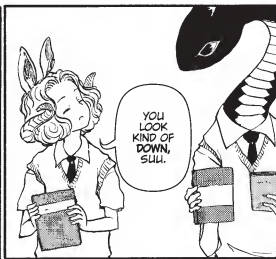
BUT...



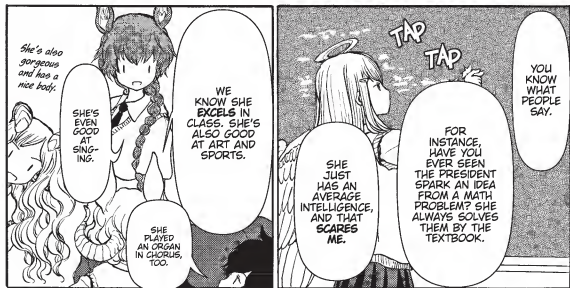
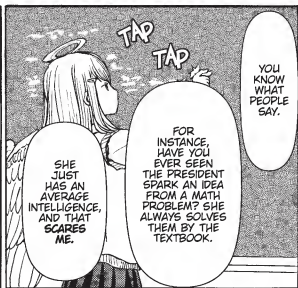
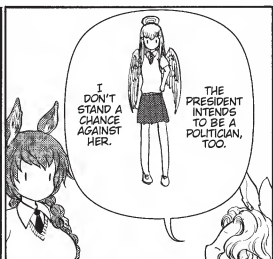
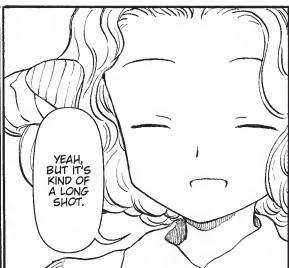


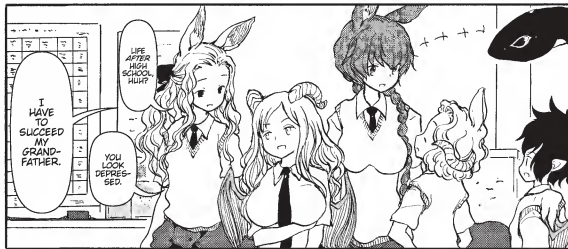
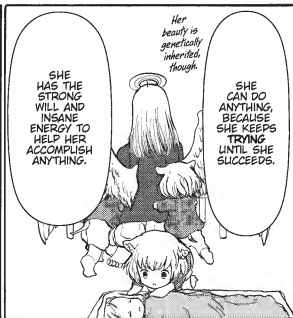


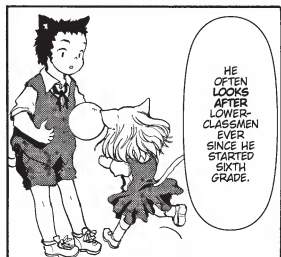
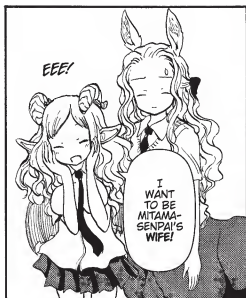




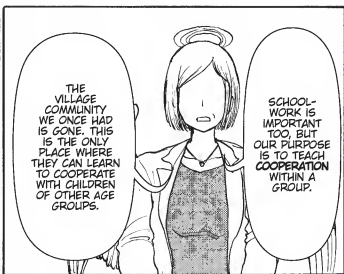












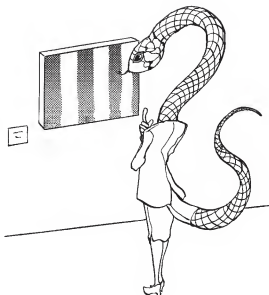
**A CentaUr's Life**

## UNDERSTANDING ANTARCTICANS: PART 8

ALTHOUGH HUMANS ARE HIGHLY INTERESTED, LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT THE BREADTH OF ANTARCTICAN KNOWLEDGE AND CIVILIZATION. WE HAVE YET TO CONFIRM WHETHER THE INTELLECTUAL SUBSPECIES IS TRULY AS INTELLIGENT AND LEARNED AS THEIR NAME SUGGESTS. ALSO LACKING IS CONFIRMATION OF THEIR PURPORTED ABILITIES SUCH AS PERFECT MEMORY, EXCELLENT COMPUTING POWER, AND RAPID ACQUISITION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES. COMPOUNDING THE KNOWLEDGE GAP CREATED BY ANTARCTICAN SECRECY IS THE FACT THAT HUMANS HAVE YET TO FULLY GRASP THEIR WRITTEN OR SPOKEN LANGUAGE. IT'S BELIEVED THAT THE ANTARCTICAN CIVILIZATION MAY HAVE ORIGINATED AS FAR BACK AS 40 MILLION YEARS AGO, AND THAT THEY BEGAN BUILDING THEIR UNDERGROUND CITY AT THAT TIME.

DESPITE THE AGE OF THEIR CIVILIZATION, ANTARCTICANS RELIED ON HUMANS FOR MODERN TRANSPORTATION LIKE AIRPLANES AND MARINE VESSELS, AND DRESSED IN SHABBY ROBES AND FUR COATS (OUTDATED ARMOR AND TRIDENTS FOR THE WARRIOR SUBSPECIES) WHEN THEY BEGAN TO ACTIVELY CONTACT OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY. THAT THEY DID NOT VENTURE INTO OTHER AREAS ASIDE FROM SOUTH AMERICA SUGGESTS THAT THEIR CIVILIZATION DEVELOPED VERY SLOWLY, THOUGH THIS IS NOT UNEXPECTED GIVEN THEIR LIMITED RESOURCES AND POPULATION, NOT TO MENTION THE EXTREME ENVIRONMENT OF THEIR CONTINENT. EVEN HUMANS IN MORE AGREEABLE CLIMATES REMAINED IN THE STONE AGE FOR SEVERAL THOUSAND YEARS, AND THE PRIMITIVE STAGES OF REASONING AND OBSERVATION YIELDED CASES OF EXTRAORDINARY DEVELOPMENT IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SUCH AS MATHEMATICS AND ASTRONOMY) IN THOSE ANCIENT HUMAN CIVILIZATIONS.

THERE IS A CONVINCING THEORY THAT ANTARCTICANS KEPT HUMANS AWAY FROM THEIR CONTINENT TO HIDE THEIR INFERIOR MILITARY TECHNOLOGY, BUT THE FACT THAT TWENTIETH CENTURY WARSHIPS AND RESEARCH VESSELS WERE UNABLE TO REACH ANTARCTICA SUGGESTS THAT THEY MAY POSSESS ADVANCED DEFENSIVE COUNTER-MEASURES. FAR FROM BEING PRIMITIVE, ANTARCTICANS ARE KNOWN TO HAVE SURPASSED HUMANS IN BIOLOGY, CIVIL ENGINEERING, MATHEMATICS, MEDICINE, AND PHARMACOLOGY AT THE LEAST. WE STILL KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT THEIR CIVILIZATION AND LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT. FOR NOW, WE ADVISE TREATING THEM WITH CAUTION AND ADOPTING A STRATEGY OF DIPLOMACY AND APPEASEMENT.



*Antarcticans seem to have limited experience with the creative arts. While they show an appreciation for music, they find literature and fine art difficult to understand, especially non-traditional forms such as avant-garde and modern art. Nevertheless, they are passionate about art appreciation and never show signs of boredom. This may be refreshing to those in the fine art world who scorn 'commoners' for lacking interest.*

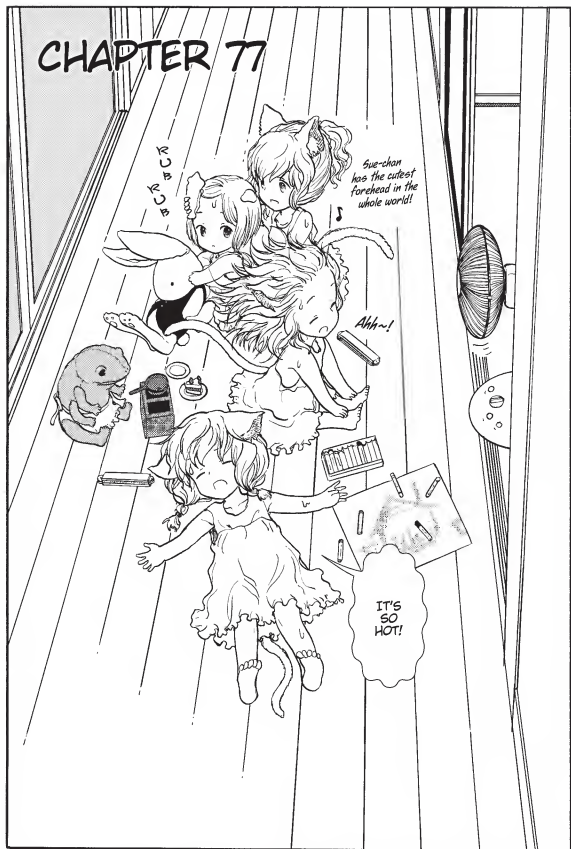
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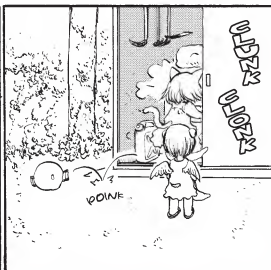
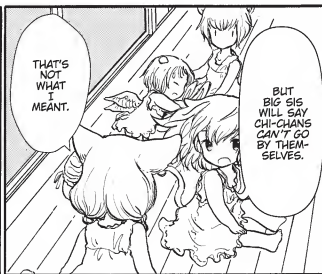
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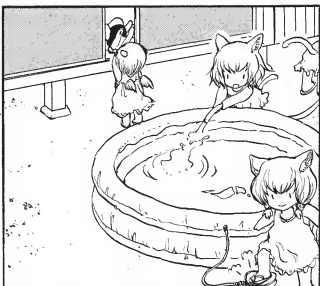
Sue-chan  
has the cutest  
forehead in the  
whole world!

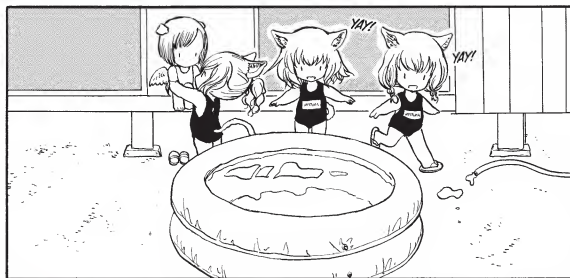
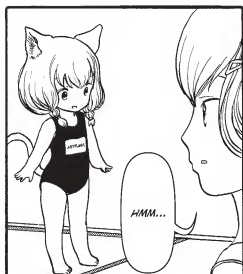
Ahh~!

IT'S  
SO  
HOT!

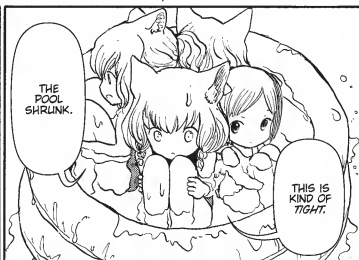
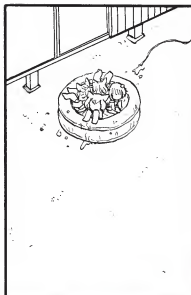


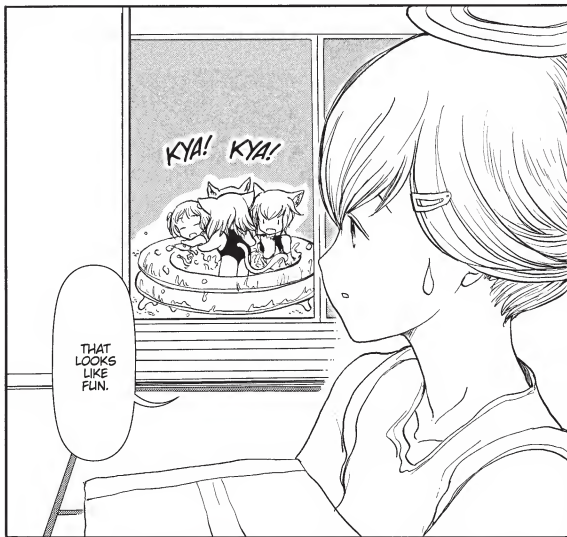
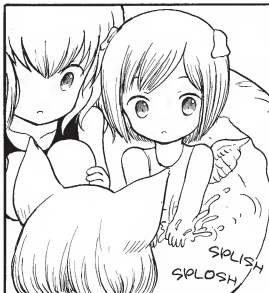
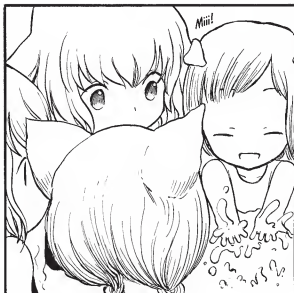


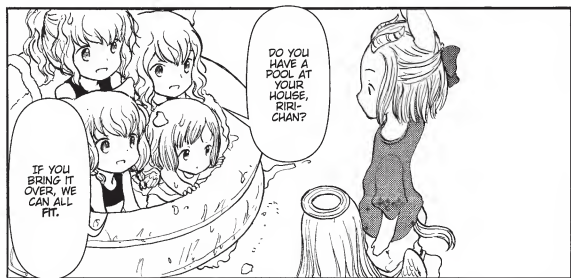
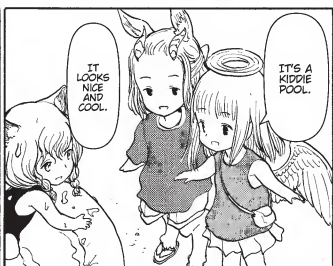
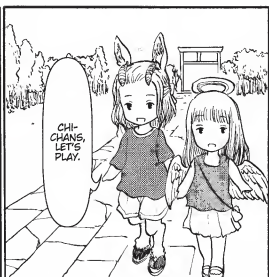


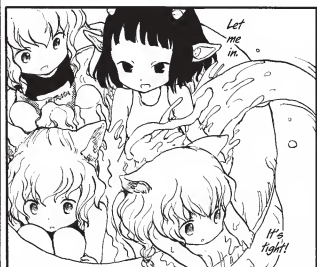
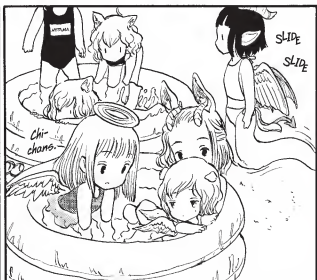
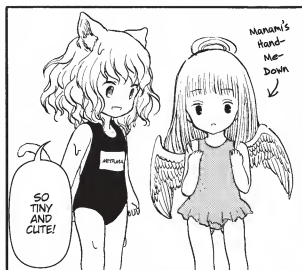


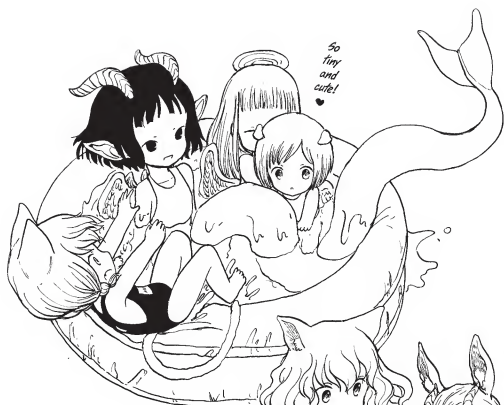


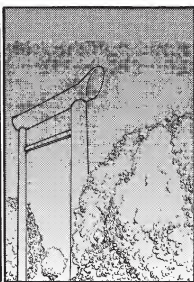


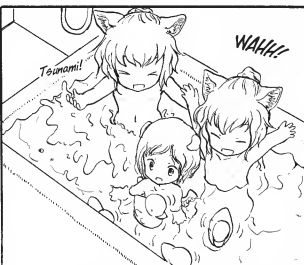
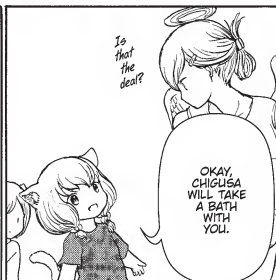
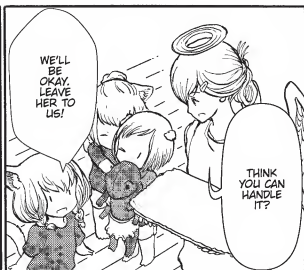




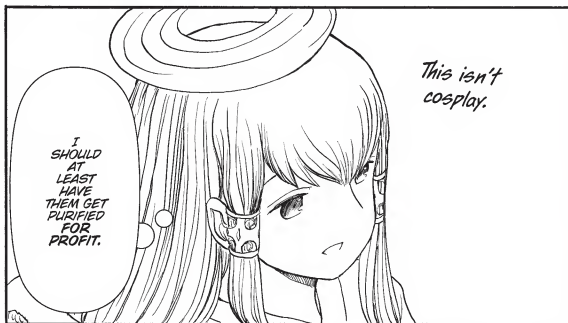
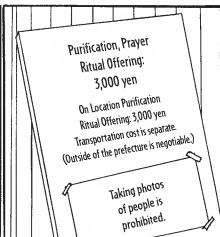
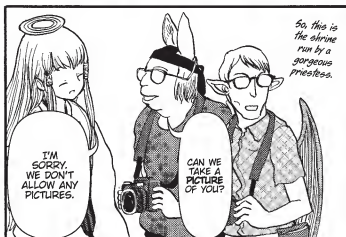
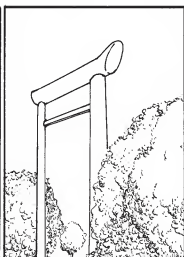
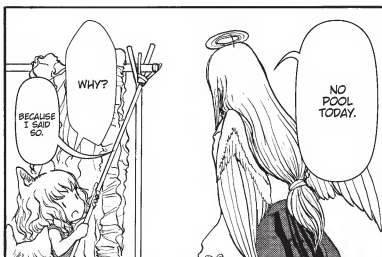












**A CentaUr's Life**

## UNDERSTANDING ANTARCTICANS: PART 9

RECENTLY, THE RUINS OF A LOST CITY WERE FOUND IN THE ARABIAN DESERT. THIS IS NOT SURPRISING IN AND OF ITSELF; SINCE ARABIA LIES ON A SINGLE CONTINENTAL PLATE (THE ARABIAN PLATE) THE GEOLOGICAL FORMATIONS ARE QUITE STABLE, AS EVIDENCED BY THE LARGE NUMBER OF ANCIENT, ORGANIC-RICH DEPOSITS THAT BECAME GIANT OIL FIELDS. THIS STABILITY ALSO MEANS THAT ARABIA OFTEN YIELDS WELL-PRESERVED PRIMEVAL RUINS. STILL, NO ONE IMAGINED THAT THE RUINS FOUND DEEP UNDERGROUND WOULD BE 40 MILLION YEARS OLD, OR THAT WHAT THEY WOULD FIND WITHIN WOULD BE QUITE SO ASTONISHING.

THE RUINS WERE A NETWORK OF VERY NARROW PASSAGEWAYS, DECORATED WITH ARTIFACTS THROUGHOUT. ARTWORK THAT ARCHAEOLOGISTS BELIEVED TO BE A DEPICTION OF THE CREATURE BURIED WITHIN THE RUIN SHOWED A REPTILE CRAWLING ON SIX LEGS. THIS IMPLIES A POSSIBLE RELATION TO ANTARCTICANS, BUT THEY SEEM FAR LESS INTERESTED IN STUDYING THEIR ANCESTORS THAN HUMANS ARE. THEIR LACK OF PARTICIPATION LEFT MUCH TO BE INTERPRETED BY OTHERS. IF THESE RUINS WERE TRULY BUILT BY THEIR ANCESTORS, IT WOULD SHATTER THE THEORY THAT A BIPEDAL RACE PLAYED A ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANTARCTICAN CIVILIZATION AND TOOL USE; THIS ALSO INDICATES THAT THEY MAY HAVE RANGED BEYOND ANTARCTICA DURING THE TIME OF SUPERCONTINENTS, OR PERHAPS LATER.

THE ACCURACY OF THE THEORIES BEHIND THE AGE AND REPTILIAN ANCESTRY OF THE RUINS STILL REMAINS QUESTIONABLE, THOUGH, AND A SIGNIFICANT ERROR IN THE AGE COULD MAKE A DRAMATIC DIFFERENCE. A RELIGIOUS TEXT THAT MENTIONS THE EXISTENCE OF A TRIBE THAT BELIEVED IN A LIZARD TOTEM DURING THE PERIOD OF IGNORANCE COULD SUGGEST THAT THE RUINS WERE WHAT WAS CONSIDERED A SMALL TEMPLE DEDICATED TO A SACRED LIZARD, THOUGH THE RUINS ARE ACTUALLY QUITE LARGE. SUCH SPECULATION IS SUPPORTED BY AN UNUSUAL LACK OF EVIDENCE IN THE ORGANIC MATTER. THERE WERE NO TRACES OF LIFE FOUND, POSSIBLY BECAUSE THE CREATURES HAD BEEN PURIFIED AND BURIED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE. THE SPIRITUAL PURPOSE IS STILL UNKNOWN, AND THERE ARE OTHER PARTS OF THE RUINS YET TO BE DISCOVERED. THE EXCAVATION IS STILL UNDERWAY.

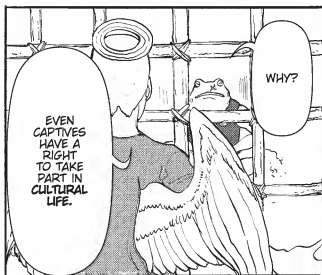
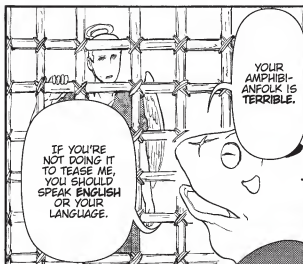
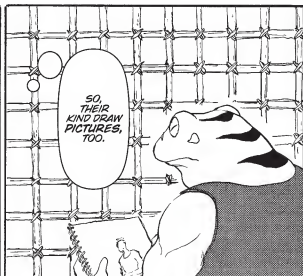


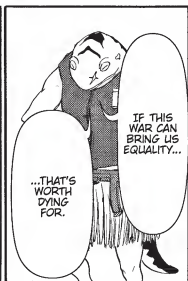
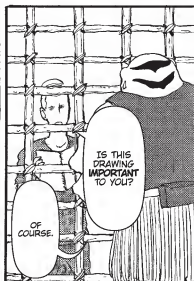
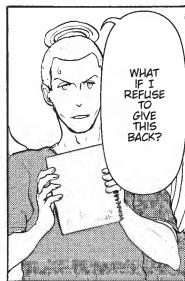
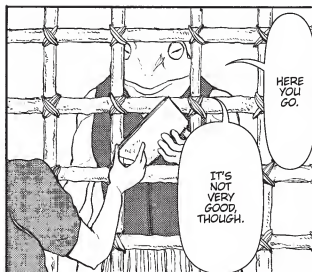
*This is an artifact recovered from an Antarctic ruin. It is believed that it depicts a snakefolk tribesman executing a captured monkeyfolk tribesman. It may seem a bit graphic, but it's actually rather typical; the ruins of other civilization have yielded similar artifacts depicting macabre victory celebrations as well. Historians have surmised that they indicate a belief that victory in foreign war is the legacy they leave for their descendants. In that respect, this ruin is not that unusual.*

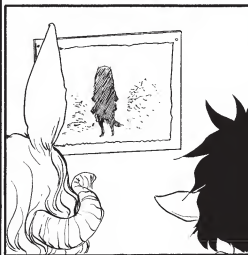
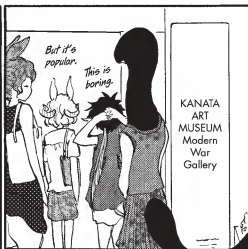
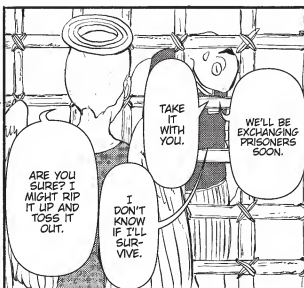
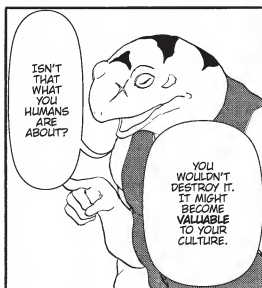
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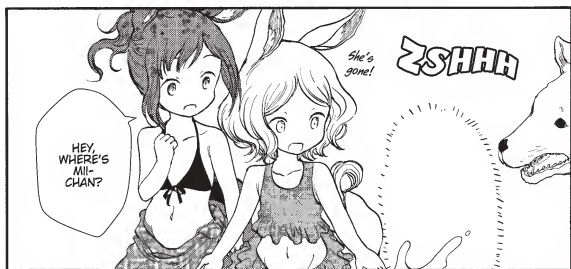
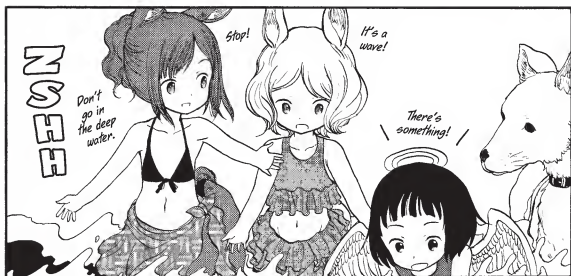


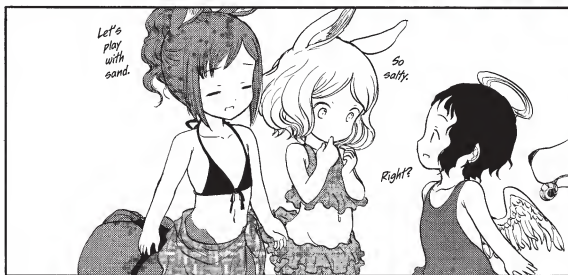


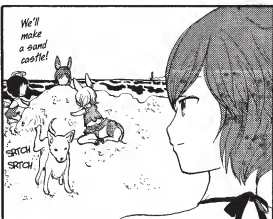
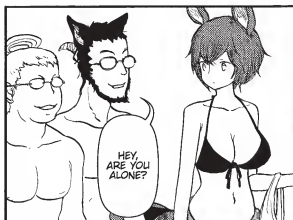


**A CentaUr's Life**









### ■ THE PLIGHT OF THE PEASANTS

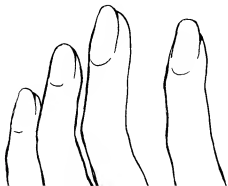
Industry prospers in times of peace, and the Edo Era was no different; but the lot of the peasant was still a difficult one, especially in Kanata.

According to historical records, Hidachi was an abundant region specializing in silk production. Accounts from this period indicate that the plains here were reputed to be so vast that the roads across it seemed endless. Geologically speaking, the plain's dark, rich topsoil is only a thin layer covering poor red soil beneath, but the lack of evidence of frequent landslides, volcanic eruption, and river flooding imply that it was still ideal for stable agriculture. Nevertheless, there was little irrigation development in central Hidachi at this time, including the area where Kanata City stands today. Instead, people built paddy fields for rice cultivation at the foot of the hills, and settlements still exist nearby to this day. Centaurs were unable to plow the water-filled rice fields for obvious physical reasons, but evidence points to extensive dryland farming as well, making Hidachi the largest wheat-producing region in Japan until modern times.

Despite these agricultural successes, the regional economy struggled due to problems with trade. The major limiting factor boils down to inadequate access to seaports, of which there were only two in Hidachi at the time. The nearest port to Kanata, Nakaminato, was still quite a distance away and could only be reached overland, making trade less feasible. The other port was even further, but could be accessed by Lake Kasumigaura and the Sanzuse River. In fact, this port was commonly used in earlier times when whole route was under the control of the Oda clan, but these holdings fragmented when the daimyo was killed at the end of the Sengoku period. Stymied by logistical boundaries on one hand and changing political boundaries on the other, Kanata lost connection to major economic zones and was forced to become largely economically self-sufficient.



The taxes of the Edo period were yet another burden on the peasants of Kanata. Most taxes were levied annually in rice, with the worth of wheat and other crops being converted to rice as previously discussed, and not converted to cash until arriving in Osaka. This may seem like a step backward at first glance, given that taxes in the previous period were paid directly in cash, but we cannot draw conclusions about this apparent regression without examining the larger picture. In this case, the answer lies in currency—copper coins, to be precise. Copper coins were issued in Japan several times during the even earlier Heian period, but there were merely symbolic. Instead, coins imported from the neighboring country Chuuka were regularly circulated as currency. These imports declined in the Sengoku period, though, resulting in a shortage. Lower-quality coins entered circulation to compensate, but their use dropped dramatically when most daimyo refused to accept them as tax payment, causing them to lose their value. Thus, the shortage of viable currency led to the reinstitution of rice taxes.



## LEARN ABOUT OUR TOWN! KANATA CITY'S PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

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With taxes once again being levied in rice, the country encouraged rice production and even banned some other cultivation, commercial crops in particular. Even traditional silk production collapsed, as peasants lacked the technology to produce silk thread themselves.

Indeed, most silk clothing made in the early Edo period was produced using imported raw silk, and it wasn't until popularity surged in the next era that the industry rebounded. With the decline in raw silk production rendering mulberry orchards unnecessary and other cash crops banned, peasants faced major economic difficulties and could only earn money by selling their meager crop surpluses. Despite this fact, the peasantry was still expected to shoulder a heavy tax burden, pay crop storage fees out-of-pocket, and provide unpaid labor for transportation services called sukegou.



A TYPICAL  
COPPER COIN

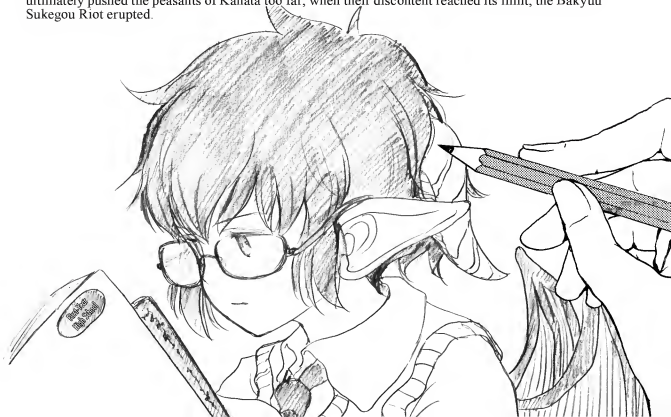


A LOW-  
QUALITY COIN

Historians argue that it was this sukegou system that later brought the peasants of Kanata to the breaking point. But what was it?

After the Bakufu took power, they built a road system (with Edo as a hub) and set up post stations along the routes. Post stations were staffed with mounted couriers to deliver official items for low or no charge, much like post stations in the earlier Heian period. However, unexpected spikes in volume often exceeded the capacity of the dedicated system, which is where sukegou came into play. Nearby villages were forced to supply men and horses to the post stations, and the burden spread to increasingly distant communities as the volume continued to rise. Villages provided these resources at their own expense, meaning that remote villages gave many more hours of unpaid work than their closer counterparts. During the busy farming season, villages that were already short on manpower simply couldn't spare anyone for sukegou, and they were forced to pay a tax penalty instead.

Villages in Kanata were far from the nearest post station, but were still expected to provide unpaid workers for sukegou. This demand, in addition to a tax burden that they already considered unfair, ultimately pushed the peasants of Kanata too far; when their discontent reached its limit, the Bakuyuu Sukegou Riot erupted.





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# A Centaur's Life

story and art by KEI MURAYAMA

VOLUME 11

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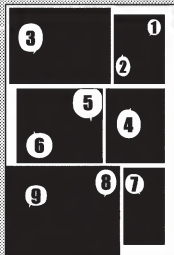
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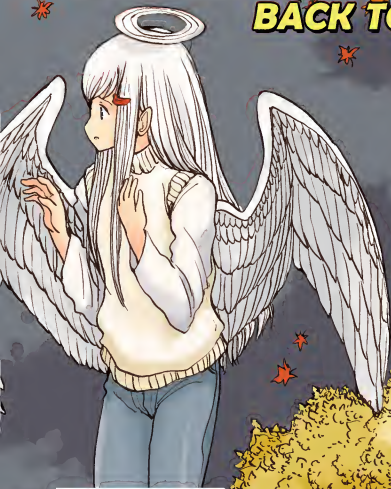
## READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from *right to left*, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



It's the start of a new year at Shin Kanata High School! Himeno and her friends are returning to familiar territory, but for their adorable underlings, it's completely new ground. The president is followed around by a draconid named Karasuba-san and one of the catfolk, Inuki-san, while Ayaka the centaur continues her long-standing admiration of Hime. Both old friends and new unite in the latest installment of *A Centaur's Life*!

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